

NEWRY PLANNING BOARD
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, October 15, 2025
Raymond C. Foster Municipal Building

Full discussion on the topics below is available on audio recording at the Newry Town Office.

Members Present: Edward (Ted) Baker, Board Chair; John (Gootsch) Gauthier, Board Vice Chair; Heidi Marotta, Board Secretary; Meredith Harrop, Alternate; Rob Kates, Alternate

Members Late:

Staff Present: Joelle Corey, Code Enforcement Officer; Becky Bean, Recording Secretary

Members & Staff Absent:

Public Attendees: Brooks Morton

Call to Order: Chairman, Ted Baker, called the meeting to order at 6:41 PM and proceeded with his opening statements.

Current Attendance/Quorum: The Chair took attendance and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Prior Attendance/Voting Eligibility: The Chair noted that he and the Board Secretary are not eligible to vote since they did not attend the previous meeting, did not listen to the audio recording, and had not read the material from that meeting. Therefore, the Vice Chair and the two alternates, Meredith and Rob, are eligible to vote on Old Business.

Previous Meeting's Minutes: The Chair clarified that those eligible to vote on the previous meeting's minutes are the Vice Chair and the two alternate members. The Board reviewed the September 24th meeting minutes. **Gootsch moved to accept the minutes of the meeting of September 24th, 2025. Meredith seconded. There was no discussion. Rob abstained from the vote, noting that he had not reviewed the minutes. The motion passed with Gootsch and Meredith voting in favor.**

Old Business

a) Timberline TH, LLC; The Village at Timberline Site Plan and Subdivision Application # 25-286, Findings of Fact: Ted and Heidi recused themselves from discussion on this application. With Ted's recusal, facilitation of the meeting was handed over to the Vice Chair during this agenda item. **Meredith moved that the Board accept the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law for Application 25-286. Rob seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously with Gootsch, Rob, and Meredith voting in favor.** The Vice Chair proceeded to sign two copies of the document with Meredith witnessing his signature.

The Chair will now facilitate the remainder of tonight's meeting, and Heidi has rejoined as a voting member.

New Business

a) Freedom of Access Act training: The Chair noted that per State Law, newly appointed and re-appointed Board members of the Planning Board have 120 days from July 1 to complete the required training. Ted asked Gootsch, Heidi, Rob, and Meredith to contact Retta, Town Administrator, so they can complete this requirement before the Oct 30 deadline. Ted mentioned that MMA is holding an online seminar for FOAA in November. Unfortunately, it will be held outside the 120-day window; however, if any Board members are interested in attending, please contact Retta.

Reports

a) Comprehensive Plan Review Committee: The Chair and the Vice Chair discussed attendance at the committee meetings. Gootsch noted that he had not be able to attend any of the meetings and will not be able to do so for at least another 100 days. Heidi may be able to attend the meetings as the Board's representative. She

will reach out to Retta for more information. Ted spoke of the importance of having Planning Board representation at these committee meetings. Gootsch will let Retta know that he is stepping down from this committee.

- b) CEO: A traffic count was done last winter. Joelle had follow-up questions for AVCOG, and she shared a printout of that email correspondence with the Board members.

Open Discussion

- a) Traffic Study – Ted noted that the Comprehensive Plan should be looking at traffic study to get a baseline of current traffic during winter season, so that when a future major subdivision or site plan with a substantial impact on traffic comes before the Board, the Board has something to refer to for previous measurements. Ted noted that he has been working with the CEO in regards to having a traffic study done annually. Joelle noted that it is not budgeted. Discussion ensued regarding the Town coordinating with Bethel and Maine DOT since the Sunday River Road crosses the town line, intersect with Route 2, and the Sunday River Road to the intersection of Skiway Road portion is a state-aid road. The group discussed the effect of the winter traffic on the whole region during peak times.
- b) UDRO – Ted encouraged all Board member to think about possible amendments, corrections and additions to the UDRO. Ted is working on revising the layout of the ordinance, which he will share with Board members prior to the Board's next meeting. Ted spoke of some Sections or subsections that he is proposing be moved. The only wording that would change is the language in Section 7, Appeals, per the attorney's recommendation to correct incompatibility between the UDRO and the Board of Appeals Ordinance. Ted noted that he is also developing a standard for Large Groundwater Extraction.
- c) Ted spoke of the high concentration of wells in the Resort Development District and mentioned to Heidi that another item for the Comprehensive Plan Review Committee would be in regards to groundwater usage. Perhaps the Town apportion money for a hydrological survey done to establish a baseline. Joelle spoke of various property owners coming to Town Meetings and reporting a drop in their well's GPM capacity. If Board members know of anyone who has a dry well, please ask them to complete the Dry Well Survey on Maine's government website. The Town has a link to that survey on its website.
- d) Joelle noted that she is also making some changes to her Land Use Ordinance and Building Code, and she mentioned some other changes that may come about from State of Maine Home Rule. It was noted that the last big amendment to the UDRO was in 2024.
- e) Discussion ensued regarding the requirements for applicants to provide information on Archeological Sites and Wildlife Habitat Sites, etc. Archeological Sites was discussed again later in this meeting.
- f) Ted noted that discussion/review of the proposed Rules of Procedures for the Board will be added to the next agenda. This document may replace the current Planning Board Bylaws.
- g) The group discussed using AI as a tool, the use of audio software, and having microphones in front of each member. Also discussed was the possibility of creating a checklist to be given to applicants to assist them in the preparation of their application packet.

Next Scheduled Meeting – Wednesday, November 5, 2025

Adjournment Heidi moved to adjourn; Gootsch seconded. With no discussion, the motion passed with all voting in favor. The meeting adjourned at 7:27 PM.