1. Amesbury Planning Board Meeting Minutes

2. In Person Meeting – June 8, 2026, at 7:03 PM

3. Chairman Pascal Rettig called the June 8, 2026, Planning Board meeting to order at 7:03 PM.
4. *To submit a public comment ahead of time email Becky Frey at* *freyr@amesburyma.gov. To speak live at the meeting fill out a public comment form and turn it into Becky Frey. There will be a public comment portion of each public hearing discussed tonight.*

5. *The Chairman notes that tonight's Planning Board meeting is being recorded by Amesbury Public Access Television; this legal step has been taken but does not act as the official record. The written meeting minutes by the Recording Secretary is the official record.*

6. Pascal Rettig initiated roll call –
7. Keith Ratner – YES
8. Joel Nice – YES
9. Tracey Chalifour – YES
10. Tom Salemi - YES
11. David Frick – YES
12. Pascal Rettig – YES

13. Also: Nipun Jain (Planning Director) and Becky Frey (Community Development Coordinator)

14. **Minutes 3-9-26**
15. Tom Salemi motion to approve the minutes from the 3-9-26 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by David Frick. The motion passed unanimously.

16. **Signs – 2 Merrimac St. (Marker 34)**
17. Nipun Jain commented that the sign was reviewed by DRC. They suggested certain revisions that were captured in the June 8th submission. The sign will be located below the light fixtures and include some relief between the letters and the wall. Staff recommends approval as revised.
18. David Frick motioned to approve the sign application for Marker 24 as revised on 6/8/26. Seconded by Keith Ratner.
19. Nipun Jain commented that any additional signs will need to come to the Board again.
20. Tracey Chalifour requested clarification on the sign across the street for 13 Merrimac.
21. Mike Sanchez commented that there is a Chapter 91 sign on the 2 Merrimac St. side and a mailbox and a sign as part of original Planning Board approval. They are all on 4 by 4 granite posts.
22. Joel Nice questioned if the final color was white. Nipun Jain confirmed that was correct.
23. The motion passed unanimously.

24. **Signs – 77 Elm St. (iMarc)**
25. Nipun Jain commented that this was also reviewed by DRC, and they had minor suggestions. Those were incorporated into the final revision. Staff recommends approving as revised.
26. Keith Ratner motioned to approve the sign application for iMarc as revised. Seconded by Tom Salemi.
27. The motion passed unanimously.

28. **City Council Referral – Bill 2026-085**
29. Nipun Jain commented that many of the Board members participated in the planning phase of this. This is the final product based on the meetings with MVPC along with city staff and volunteers.
30. Pascal Rettig clarified they put this together with MVPC. Nipun Jain confirmed that was correct. Staff provided the data and MVPC put it together. Keith Ratner commented that they were doing this for all communities in the region. Nipun Jain confirmed they used a grant for that.
31. Pascal Rettig clarified that the city needs to approve the Housing Production Plan and the City Council is looking for a non-binding recommendation from the Board. Nipun Jain confirmed that was correct. City council will formally adopt the plan.
32. Tom Salemi questioned if the HPP was necessary to apply for grants or if it was something that guides planning in this city.
33. Nipun Jain commented it guides the community vision on addressing the housing needs of the community. It is largely based on the 2020 census data. The primary focus is to look at the general trends and needs, how we are managing growth, and the kind of housing we are using. It helps guide policy, regulations, and efforts the community can make to create housing for all. Many of the recommendations are already underway. Things have sped up faster than anticipated. It will be critical as it ends its 5 year lifespan to look at changes and make the next one more relevant for the next phase of growth.
34. Tracey Chalifour commented that she wished this was tied to a master plan. It doesn't have to be, but it would be helpful to see the continuum of the plan. MVPC said they are not co-dependent but she thought it would be nice if they were more aligned. She did have a couple red line recommendations in the Amesbury Priority Housing Target Areas table. Some of the projects are in different phases or have the wrong unit counts. It's all on page 38. Tracey Chalifour motioned to send a positive recommendation with the amendments to the Amesbury Priority Housing Target Areas table. Seconded by David Frick.
35. Joel Nice commented that chapter 5 talks about housing production strategies and the production of affordable units. His desire would be to see that be real numbers. It could be calculated more accurately. How should we be looking at planning to reach the goal of over 10%. Pascal Rettig commented those numbers are tied into the statute. That's why those specific numbers are there.
36. Nipun Jain commented that the idea behind it is the documents should be read periodically to generate ideas, discussion, and procedures to create new avenues to help achieve them. The listed percentage is tied to the state statue. Amesbury does have projects in the pipeline to help us achieve the 10%. That would provide time to help come up with other

strategies and mechanisms to stay at or above 10%. The intent is to provide different avenues to all households in the community.

37. Nipun Jain commented that the Board should let staff know edits this week and they can incorporate them with MVPC.
38. Tracey Chalifour amended the motion to update the table Amesbury Priority Housing Target Areas on page 38 an any additional edits. Seconded by David Frick. The motion passed unanimously.

39. **ANR – 8 Noel St.**
40. Jennifer Platt from Boston Gas Company commented that they were continuing efforts to remediate the Powwow River. This property is at 8 Noel St. It will split to 87A the developed area and 87 B which is the tidal flats. The demarcation is the mean hightide water line. It is marked a non-buildable lot and 87A remains a complying buildable lot. Access will be from Noel St. and by a barge on the river. They were before the Board last year for Oakland St. This is from a plant in the early 1800-1900s that created coal gas. They are undergoing an effort under DEP to clean it up here.
41. Pascal Rettig questioned if they had any comments from staff. Nipun Jain questioned what portion of the 87A frontage was actually paved. Jennifer Platt responded the frontage was along Noel St. and that includes the 50-foot tab on the plan. It is an existing street and existing traveled way. Nipun Jain responded that an ANR requires 3 criteria to make it an ANR plan. One of those items is the complying frontage. It would be good to get clarity on how they are getting access on Noel St. Jennifer Platt commented they will be accessing it from the road and the riverside.
42. Pascal Rettig noted they had a question on frontage. Joel Nice noted the historical plan did not even show Oak St. Nipun Jain recommended getting feedback from the city engineer on this.
43. Nipun Jain commented that there should be more information on Noel St. showing what is paved vs. not paved. Jennifer Platt questioned how it would work if the actual road on the ground doesn't match what's been laid out. Nipun Jain noted these are survey or engineering related questions. They will talk to the DPW director who oversees the city roads, and he can clarify or answer these questions.
44. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the ANR for 8 Noel St. to the June 22, 2026, Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Tracey Chalifour.
45. Nipun Jain questioned if there was any objection from the applicant. Jennifer Platt responded that there was no objection from the applicant.
46. The motion passed unanimously.

47. **Continued Hearings – 28 Haverhill Road.**
48. Pascal Rettig commented that at the last meeting the Board continued this to the current meeting primarily to select peer review.
49. Nipun Jain commented that the Board has a proposal from Stantec to do civil engineering, traffic and environmental review. Staff recommends that the Board accept Stantec's proposal and request applicant fund the contract.

50. David Frick motioned to accept Stantec's peer review proposal for 28 Haverhill Road and request applicant fund the contract. Seconded by Keith Ratner. The motion passed unanimously.
51. Tom Salemi questioned if they received any more information from the state on the driveway access. Nipun Jain responded that was in a holding pattern until the traffic review is complete to see if any additional issues need to be addressed before that.
52. Pascal Rettig opened pubic comment. There was no public comment.
53. David Frick motioned to continue the application for 28 Haverhill Road to the July 27, 2026 Planning Board meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.

54. **Continued Hearings – 84 Congress Street**
55. Payson Cahill commented that since the last meeting he was given a punch list of 7 items to take care of. The first item was to meet with the Building Inspector to review the building envelope and stairways. They performed a walkthrough with Jim Wilson, and he signed off. The second item was that the proposed staircase was not drawn to scale and that should be reviewed with the building inspector. Jim Wilson signed off on that as well. There was a recommendation to add a window to the bedroom and that has been added to the plan. The use of the first floor was a question. They updated the plan to show the first floor is a garage and the only intended use is a parking garage and storage. A vegetation screen of plants have been added along the property for abutter privacy. The plan shows one parking spot per unit and the trash barrels for the units have been shown to demonstrate there is not a safety issue at the end of the driveway. They will put arborvitaes in for the screening.
56. Pascal Rettig commented that they normally expect to see that on a site plan setback from the stairs. This plan is showing icons of trees, so it is not really telling us what will be put in for screening. The Board is used to seeing it on a site plan with a little more definition.
57. Nipun Jain clarified that the Board is looking for where will they be planted on the site and how many will be planted. This plan does not state what kind of plants. If it's arborvitaes, then what height will they be planted at? How far apart? Where are they in relation to the property line?
58. Kieth Ratner commented that the setbacks should be put on the plan. Nipun Jain commented that it is not clear from this drawing how far or close to the property line the stair landing would be. There is no dimension showing the setback from the garage to the property line. Pascal Rettig commented that they need to see the stairs on the site plan with setbacks. Nipun Jain commented that they need to see it to make sure it's realistic and there is enough room for the stairs and landscape.
59. Pascal Rettig commented that they need to see an updated site plan and confirm there is enough parking. Nipun Jain commented that they will need one space for the ADU which is in the garage and the duplex requires 3 spaces. Pascal Rettig questioned if that block of parking allowed for three parking spaces. Nipun Jain responded it looked like it was 24.7 feet and the average parking space is 9. Joel Nice commented they should show the dimensions of the parking spaces. Nipun Jain commented that they should make sure it's properly striped and there is enough room for a car to park and allow for circulation.
60. Pascal Rettgi commented that the Board could accept a picture for three cars parked in front. Nipun Jain commented that they should make sure no other cars parked in the

driveway on the site. Pascal Rettig noted that the photo shows three cars parked off street now.

61. Nipun Jain commented that they could make sure when they approve the site plan they are approving something that conforms. They should be able to resolve it. They should show on the site plan the landscape screening and details about that. Also the proposed setbacks and setbacks of the staircase to the property line.
62. Pascal Rettig noted they should have a draft decision for the next meeting.
63. Pascal Rettig opened public comment.
64. Karen Weber of 86 Congress St. commented that most of everything she was going to address tonight was brought up. Ms. Weber had questions about the size of the landscape screen. Will they be on the 84 Congress property or on the property line? There is some landscaping that was planted before they owned the property. There are two at the top that need to come down which is a separate issue. The Board addressed all concerns on the vegetation screen. The stairwell changed from last meeting to this meeting. It looks like it was previously being installed where the window is and now is being moved over with the new stairwell.
65. Nipun Jain commented that hopefully when they are putting in for a building permit there will be more detail. It is unclear where it will be so hopefully with the revised information it will become more clear.
66. Karen Weber commented that this sits on top of her property and is overlooking it. Screening is important to her.
67. Joel Nice motioned to continue to the application for 84 Congress St. to the June 22, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Keith Ratner. The motion passed unanimously.

68. Tracey Chalifour motioned to take the applications for 29 Water Street out of order. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motioned passed unanimously.

69. **Continued Hearings – 29 Water Street**
70. Nipun Jain read the legal notice for the new hearing for 29 Water Street into the record.
71. Mike Sanchez and Sam Colombo represented that applicant, 21 Water Street Realty Trust. Mike Sanchez provided brief updates on the project. The RDA application was approved by the Conservation Commission last week. They did not do an NOI because the project has minimal impact to the wetland concerns. They do require some lay down area around the building so they requested a licensing agreement from the Mayor's Office. They went to DRC last week and Nipun can speak to that recommendation. They incorporated feedback from DRC and the Historical Commission. There was a conversation about whether they would put the condensing units on the outside or put them inside with louvers. They can take two flood vents out and put them into the bottom of the louvered openings. The last item is a planting plan. They indicated in the roofline where the vents and exhaust will come out.
72. Pascal Rettig questioned if any additional changes were recommended from the Design Review Committee. Nipun Jain confirmed the applicant updated the plans based on the

DRC recommendations. They discussed the locations of the flood vents and that was updated on the architectural set.

73. Mike Sanchez commented that the Historical Commission approved the project.
74. David Frick commented that there was one issue the Board hasn't addressed yet and that is the payment in lieu of affordable units. OCED has been working on a formula for that. Is the applicant comfortable working with OCED on that payment? Mike Sanchez commented that he had seen a proposed formula and if that is close to what it is, then they are ok with working with that.
75. Daivd Frick commented that they talked about the parking and know the city has a parking area. It seems the Board could move toward having staff drafting a decision.
76. Tracey Chalifour questioned how package delivery would work and if there was an irrigation plan for the landscaping. Mike Sanchez responded that they will likely irrigate with a drip line. They are looking at multiple ideas for deliveries. They may put an inset in the front entry doors to create a vestibule. That is the solution they are leaning toward.
77. Tom Salemi questioned what the construction timeline was for the project and will it obstruct public areas.
78. Nipun Jain responded that they will require a CMMP that outlines those kind of issues. That will be screened by the TRC and the Mayor's Office. There is a lot of oversight of construction. They are using the least amount of space needed for public space. Joel Nice noted that the temporary fencing was shown on the plan. Mike Sanchez commented that they are committing to be done before the next block party. It will take about one year.
79. Pascal Rettig questioned if they had all the materials they needed for the wetland and floodplain special permit. Nipun Jain commented that they need a narrative discussing how they comply. Based on the responses to those the Board can determine if the project complies.
80. Joel Nice questioned if there were any restrictions to construction trucks and mobility on the site for gravel. Mike Sanchez commented that the RDA was approved with BMPS. Trucks will stay on stabilized surface during construction. They still need to put in erosion control and crushed stone. They will scaffold the entire building. That will reduce the need for boom lifts. They will scrim the entire fence. Nipun Jain commented that typically when public land is used temporarily, the damage to the grounds will be fixed. They will ensure concerns raised would be properly documented.
81. Joel Nice questioned if there was paved the walkway on the west side. Mike Sanchez responded that is existing. They are not proposing any new walkways on public land. They will take out broken asphalt and put in plantings.
82. Nipun Jain commented that it was not finalized if the transformer across the street will be on a pad or aerial mounted. The applicant should be cognizant if it has to be pad mounted then is should be in an area that is less active.
83. Pascal Rettig commented that they were in a position at next meeting to have draft decisions for both permits. Nipun Jain commented he may need more time for the flood plain so he would prefer to write one decision not two.
84. Keith Ratner motioned to ask for a draft decision on the June 22, 2026, Planning Board Meeting. Seconded Tom Salemi.

85. Tracey Chalifour commented that according to the city's website overnight parking in the municipal lots are restricted to residents of CBD. There may be some issue there with unit owners getting parking permits. It may be something the city wants to look at. Pascal Rettig commented that the Planning Board would grant the waiver. Then it is up to the applicant to look at the logistics.
86. The motion passed unanimously.
87. Pascal Rettig opened public comment. There was no public comment.
88. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the application for 29 Water Street to June 22, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Joel Nice.
89. Pascal Rettig commented that ideally it would be good to get an agreement from OCED and the city on the number for a payment in lieu. Nipun Jain confirmed they would have a response on that.
90. Pascal Rettig questioned if anything else was needed. Nipun Jain responded that they may need a permanent easement with the landscape plan. It can be a condition of approval.
91. The motion passed unanimously.

92. **Continued Hearings – 9 and 9RR Oakland Street**
93. Daivd motioned to continue the application for 9 and 9 RR Oakland Street to the June 22, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.

94. **Continued Hearings – Rocky Hill Development**
95. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the application for the Rocky Hill Development to the July 13, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.

96. **Continued Hearings – 29 Lake Attitash Road**
97. David Frick motioned to continue the application for 29 Lake Attitash Road to the July 13, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Joel Nice. The motion passed unanimously.

98. **New Hearings – 29 Water Street**
99. This item was addressed above with the rest of the 29 Water St. application.

100. **Administrative – 2 Merrimac Street**
101. Nipun Jain commented that the project is nearly complete. There were two components to the project; the marina and the house. The applicant has worked to close out the project. They provided an as built, a performance bond, and have provided a draft easement. Usually staff suggests that the easement is reviewed by legal counsel and presented to city council for acceptance. They need a recommendation from the Board on further action. The performance bond was put together by the applicant's engineer. They are hoping someone from the city can confirm the amount. Mike Sanchez commented that they debated on whether to revise the letter because the only things not done on this list at this point in time is the parking sign, 8 wheel stops, and the raised crosswalk. It doesn't make sense to put in the raised crosswalk before the boat ramp project. The city is still playing with the entryway and how they want that to tie into their project. That's the

biggest item left. They are happy to work with staff on a payment in lieu of installing the raised crosswalk at this time. They received the partial certificate of compliance from the Conservation Commission and the only condition left was the two growing seasons. They have an erosion control bond in place with the Board.

102. Pascal Rettig commented that it sounded like they didn't need a bond if a payment in lieu is decided on. Mike Sanchez commented that they were open to any solution. The boat ramp is a year and a half out.

103. Pascal Rettig commented that they could come back to the next meeting with solution worked out with staff. Joel Nice questioned if a raised crosswalk would still be built with that project. Mike Sanchez suggested that they integrate it with the boat ramp project. Thie project can give a payment in lieu.

104. Nipun Jain commented there was a lot of moving pats with the boat ramp. They will work with the applicant. Tonight they need to make sure there were no open questions. They have received an as built that can be reviewed by the peer reviewer.

105. David Frick motioned to have Stantec review the as built. Seconded by Joel Nice. The motion passed unanimously.

106. **Administrative – Invoices**

107. Daivd Frick motioned to approve the invoices for Stantec listed below. Seconded by Keith Ratner. Unanimous.

   1. A Stantec invoice for 29 Lake Attitash Road in the amount of $1,938.25.
   2. A Stantec invoice for Oakland St. in the amount of $1,797.75.

108. The motion passed unanimously.

109. **Adjournment**

110. Keith Ratner motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 pm. Seconded by Keith Joel Nice. The motion passed unanimously.