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By City Clerk at 5:45 pm, Sep 15, 2026

1. Amesbury Planning Board Meeting Minutes

2. In Person Meeting – July 27, 2026, at 7:00 PM

3. Chairman Pascal Rettig called the July 27, 2026, Planning Board meeting to order at 7:00 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 – ABSENT
9. Tracey Chalifour – YES
10. Tom Salemi – YES
11. Eric Girard - YES
12. David Frick – ABSENT
13. Pascal Rettig – YES

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

15. **Signs – 135 Main St. (Main Street Congregational Church)**
16. Becky Frey commented that the applicants came back to the Design Review Committee Meeting to discuss the revised drawing they preferred with the white background and the thrift store hours in the oval. The Design Review Committee was amenable to that revision and voted to send a positive recommendation for this revised sign to the Planning Board.
17. Pascal Rettig commented that they also got a recommendation to stipulate that the applicant secure a license agreement with the city to place the sign on city property before the new sign is installed.
18. Tom Salemi motioned to approve the sign for 135 Main St. – Main Street Congregational Church as revised with stipulation that the applicant secure a license agreement with the city to place the sign on city property before the new sign is installed. Seconded by Keith Ratner. The motion passed unanimously.

19. **Signs – 100 Macy St. (Oye Mira)**
20. Becky Frey commented that this also went to the Design Review Committee. They sent a positive recommendation to the Planning Board with the following stipulations. 1. The pylon sign was going to be revised to show a white background (like all the other signs); 2.

the wall sign would be modified to include an ACM backer board (so the building wall is not painted the dark colors) and 3. the existing applied window signs will be removed.

21. Keith Ratner motioned to approve the signs for 100 Macy Street – Oye Mira with the stipulations outlined above. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.

22. **Signs – 100 Macy St. (Stop n Shop)**
23. Becky Frey commented that this went to Design Review Committee, and they sent a positive recommendation to the Planning Board for the Stop and Shop application as presented.
24. Tom Salemi motioned to approve the sign application for 110 Macy Street – Stop n Shop as presented. Seconded by Keith Ratner. The motion passed unanimously.

25. **Continued Hearings – 28 Haverhill Road**
26. Tom Salemi motioned to continue the application for 28 Haverhill Road to the August 10, 2026 Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Keith Ratner. The motion passed unanimously.

27. **Continued Hearings – Rocky Hill Development**
28. Becky Frey commented that the applicant requested to continue because they did not have many new items to discuss and learned that the full Board would not be present tonight. They requested to continue to a future date where there could be a more comprehensive discussion, and the full Board is present.
29. Tracey Chalifour questioned if there was any feedback or additional conversation on the Coastal Trails Coalition letter. Nick Cracknell commented that the letter was sent to the applicant. Vanesse and Associates are aware of that letter and there has been communication between Vanesse, the Mayor's Office, and DOT about creating connections. VHB is about to do a final pass of the revised plans. They will make sure VHB got a copy of the letter and consider it as it relates to the project. Tracey Chalifour commented that it was a good thing to consider because the MBTA zoning is all about bikeable and pedestrian connection.
30. Keith Ratner motioned to continue the application for the Rocky Hill Development to the August 10, 2026, Planning Board Meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.
31. **Administrative – 201 Elm Street**
32. Pascal Rettig commented that there was a member from the public who would like to speak about traffic calming on Elm St.
33. Steve Ridgley commented that he has lived on 8 Lyons Court for 49 years. He is a retired school teacher and member of Amesbury Outdoors and Coastal Trails Coalition. The Board has already heard from the Coastal Trails Coalition and gave logical reasons for two simple requests. The Rocky Hill developer should make the sidewalk 3-feet wider and add a flashing light. It should be required. It makes sense. The city should avoid wondering why didn't we do it then. Imagine Amesbury 5-10 years from now. It will be a different place. There is a lot of building happening. It will be a greater community. The city will be busy with children on bikes. By then the Riverwalk will be built and there will be a rail trail extension across Rocky Hill Road. People will still have to cross the road to go on a 5-foot

sidewalk and across the street teeming with traffic from an increasing population. The city may have changed in many ways, but he suspects the budget and cost will not. This should be incorporated now. This area creates all kinds of traffic, and they are asking for non-vehicular infrastructure. Then is now so let's get it done.

34. Becky Frey commented that this lot release for 201 Elm St. would allow for the sale of the cape house and the historic home. The amended covenant requires the buyer of the historic home to acknowledge there is a preservation restriction on the property. At the last meeting Nipun Jain noted some items were missing. The applicant has submitted retaining wall information and the storm water information since then. Staff will not recommend releasing the two barn units until all other items are satisfied.
35. Tom Salemi motioned to release lots 1 and 3 from the 201 Elm St. covenant and accept the changes in the draft covenant dated 7/27/26. Seconded by Eric Girard. The motion passed unanimously.

36. **Administrative – 102 Kimball Road**
37. Hazem Dani commented that he was the civil engineer representing Wessell Construction. The approved project at 102 Kimball Road has a proposed 2-family dwelling unit on the site with a porous pavement driveway and a pervious paver parking spot. They are requesting a modification to relocate the building to face the street. It will provide a better view and better circulation. They are also proposing to modify the previously approved porous pavement into conventional asphalt. They are proposing a storm water mitigation system to mitigate the additional runoff from the driveway area. They will catch the runoff and direct it to a rain garden. They will collect the roof drainage and direct it to a bio retention area. They have submitted a full drainage report.
38. Pascal Rettig commented that this was a smaller project, but it is in the Water Resource Protection District. They usually have someone review that stormwater. Nick Cracknell commented that staff has reached out to DPW to see if the new storm water engineer could review this instead of a peer review consultant. It makes sense to do it this way for a small project.
39. Pascal Rettig commented that the project was before the Board for a while last year. These modifications are not insignificant changes to the building. Has this modification been to DRC? Nick Cracknell responded that it has not. This project was in front of the Board for year to a year and a half. The whole site is in Zone 2 which is the well head for the ground water. The project received site plan approval and a special permit for a cluster development, common access driveway, and Water Resource Protection District. There were substantial waivers granted with the project. They didn't require peer review because of the porous driveway and pavers. It wasn't required under the ordinance because it was less than 2,500 sf. If they wanted to pave the driveway, then they would need to provide that report and would have had that reviewed. There was not a landscape or lighting requirement. DRC did look at the building design a year ago. The house is changing location and changing from a colonial to a farmhouse. The stormwater is being revised with an impervious driveway. It will be somewhere around 7,000 sf. That is why they provided a report. The question before the Board tonight is whether this is a minor or major modification. Is there a material substantive enough change between what's there and

what's before the Board that someone would want to know about. It would make sense to have the stormwater plan and report reviewed by someone. If DPW can do it, then that is great. If they can't do it, then the Board would need to get a third party to review it. The building design is significantly different, but it can work. Staff recommends the Board send this to the DRC prior to the next meeting. The DRC can make sure the house as proposed designed and conceptualized fits with the original approval. If those two things are met, then staff thinks this modification could be a minor change. It makes sense to give them a chance to get somewhere in two weeks with the DRC and city engineer. At the next meeting they can hire an engineer if DPW can't review it.

40. Keith Ratner clarified the Board should wait to decide if it's a major or minor modification at the next meeting. Nick Cracknell confirmed that was correct.
41. Tom Salemi questioned why these changes were necessary. Jay Wessell responded that they feel it would look better aesthetically. Tom Salemi commented that he would like to have DRC to look at it and agreed the storm water should be reviewed. If the city can't do it, then they should use a third party.
42. Pascal Rettig questioned if the applicant understood what is outlined. Jay Wessell responded that they would prefer not to wait. They didn't understand the restrictions on the lot. Pascal Rettig commented that this had a special permit and went through a lot of process. Jay Wessell authorized peer review if it was needed.
43. Pascal Rettig commented that the motion would be to authorize staff to get peer review if needed for the storm water and send to the modification to DRC.
44. Eric Girard commented that including a narrative of the changes and why they are being proposed would be helpful for the review.
45. Keith Ratner motioned to ask staff to review the stormwater or get peer review if they cannot review it internally and send the modification to DRC for design review before the next meeting. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.

46. **Administrative – Planning Board Signatory**
47. Keith Ratner motioned to make Pascal Rettig a second signatory for the Planning Board. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.

48. **Administrative – 2 Merrimac Street Bond Reduction**
49. Mike Sanchez commented that they discussed this a couple meetings ago and they discussed the installation of a raised walkway. It is illogical to install it right now because of the boat ramp work. They are proposing to give the city $12,000 to use for the installation of a raised crosswalk when the boat ramp work is complete. This amount was discussed with Nipun Jain.
50. Keith Ratner motioned to reduce the Erosion Control Bond to $5,800, accept the offer of $12,000 in lieu of installing the raised crosswalk, and release the remaining $1,010.50 to the applicant. Seconded by Tracey Chalifour. The motion passed unanimously.

51. **Administrative – Invoices**
52. Keith Ratner motioned to approve invoices listed below. Seconded by Eric Girard.
    1. A Stantec invoice for 28 Haverhill Road in the amount of $4,370.

53. The motion passed unanimously.

54. **Adjournment**
55. Eric Girard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm. Seconded by Tom Salemi. The motion passed unanimously.