

**TOWN OF MANCHESTER
MINUTES OF BUSINESS MEETING
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION/INLAND WETLANDS AND
WATERCOURSES AGENCY
FOR THE MEETING OF
JUNE 1, 2026**

MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Person: Michael Stebe, Chairperson
Daniela Luna, Secretary
Teresa Ike
Robert Shanbaum
Zachary Reichelt
Electronically: Patrick Kennedy, Vice Chairperson
Eric Prause
Chris Schoeneberger

ALTERNATE MEMBERS SITTING:

In Person: Maliha Ahsan

ALTERNATES PRESENT:

In Person: Margaret Brewer

ABSENT:

Arianna Larson
Sara Van Buren

ALSO PRESENT:

In Person: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning & Economic
Development
Renata Bertotti, Deputy Director of Planning
David Laiuppa, Environmental Planner/Wetlands
Agent
Electronically: Nancy Martel, Recording Secretary

The Business Meeting opened at 10:45 P.M.

HOP BROOK BEND LLC – Special Exception Detailed Plan for adaptive reuse of an existing historic mill building for a brewpub use, including on-site brewing, food service, and on-premises consumption, with associated site improvements at 176 Hartford Road. – Special Exception Detailed Plan (PSE-0051-2026)

Mr. Josh Morano, Managing Member, Hop Brook Bend LLC, introduced himself. Mr. Morano explained the proposal for the adaptive reuse of the existing space within the historic Cheney

Mills complex that will preserve and revitalize an underutilized property while maintaining its historic character.

Mr. Morano reported that site improvements are limited to historically compatible signs, a modest outdoor seating area and related pedestrian-focused enhancements. There are no building enhancements proposed. There will be no increase in the impervious coverage and no impact to the adjacent wetlands. Existing public infrastructure, including water, sewer, roadways and utilities, is fully capable of supporting the proposed use.

Mr. Morano commented that traffic and parking analysis demonstrate compliance with applicable zoning requirements and indicate impacts consistent with comparable restaurants and brewpub uses. The project advances Manchester's goals of historic preservation, adaptive reuse, economic development, and community activation while bringing new life to an important historic district property. An overview of traffic and parking was delivered by Mr. Morano.

The proposed brewery is a low-intensity neighborhood commercial use designed to operate within the capacity of the existing municipal infrastructure. Mr. Morano noted that the utility demands are expected to be comparable to or lower than those of a typical restaurant. The brewing operation will incorporate responsible wastewater management and byproduct diversion practices. The floor plan and site plans were shown.

Mr. Morano reported that 176 Hartford Road is well positioned to support the proposed use with safe and efficient access from both Hartford Road and Prospect Street. Existing sidewalks, crosswalks and nearby bicycle connections provide strong multimodal access. The addition of a stop sign at the Hartford Road entrance will further improve traffic control and pedestrian safety. A detailed view of the parking plan and access to the property was displayed.

The proposed outdoor patio is an approximately 1,800 sq. ft. accessory seating area located within the approved site limits. It will not include outdoor entertainment. Safety is provided through landscaped concrete barriers separating seating from vehicle circulation with low-impact lighting and historically approved site improvements. Mr. Morano displayed a mock-up of the future sign.

According to Mr. Morano, the overall design uses appropriate materials, colors and proportion to complement the historic district. The outdoor lighting uses a small number of historically compatible fixtures and low-intensity string lights. The lighting will be downward directed and designed to remain contained within the patio area.

Mr. Morano stated that the project aligns with many of the goals identified by the Town of Manchester, including historic preservation, adaptive reuse, economic development and community activation.

MOTION: Mr. Shanbaum moved to extend the meeting beyond 11:00 P.M. Ms. Luna seconded the motion. All members, with the exception of Ms. Ike, voted in favor of the extension.

After a question from Mr. Stebe, Mr. Morano noted that they are not making any substantive changes to the façade apart from the signage.

Ms. Bertotti reported that staff reviewed the application. There were a couple of very minor and technical comments. Staff recommends approval subject to meeting those recommendations from the survey team and the zoning officer. She put the applicant on notice that one of the signs is not located on the applicant's property. The Town of Manchester does not allow off-premises signage, and the sign will have to be moved onto the applicant's property.

Mr. Tom Zipp referred to the property deed where it was agreed that 176 Hartford Road had the right to place signage on the eastern boundary of 178 Hartford Road.

Ms. Bertotti stated that the Commission cannot interpret or approve that.

Mr. Prause thanked the applicant for a very intentional modification. It is a great example of adaptive reuse which is compatible with the area.

Special Exception Detailed Plan (PSE-0051-2026)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the special exception detailed plan for adaptive reuse of an existing historic mill building for a brewpub use, including on-site brewing, food service, and on-premises consumption, with associated site improvements at 176 Hartford Road, with the modifications as specified in an email with the subject: "Staff Review Comments" which was emailed on June 1, 2026, by Renata Bertotti, Deputy Director of Planning, to Joshua Morano, Hop Brook Bend LLC (d.b.a. Lost Realm Craft Co.). Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The reason for the approval is that the proposed activity meets the special exception criteria in Art. VI, Sec. 18.10.3 and general detailed plan requirements of Art. VI, Sec. 18.7.1.

TOWN OF MANCHESTER – 8-24 mandatory referral for the potential purchase of 29 Eldridge Street. – Mandatory Referral (MR-0002-2026)

Mr. Gary Anderson reported that, according to state statute, any purchase or sale of property requires a report from the Planning and Zoning Commission prior to the sale.

The intent to purchase 29 Eldridge Street is for additional parking for the new library. According to Mr. Anderson, the property to the north, 33 Eldridge Street, was purchased recently.

Mr. Anderson explained that the property is about one quarter of an acre. It is a two-family home with leases expiring in August. The home is approximately 1,700 sq. ft. and has a two-car garage, all zoned Residence B.

The property is within the worker housing area of the Cheney Brothers National Historic Landmark District and is part of the Manchester Historic District. Mr. Anderson noted that the chair of the Cheney Commission has been made aware of this sale.

Mr. Anderson commented that this is a Planning project with costs and benefits. The Town feels it would be worth acquiring this property for parking.

Engineering and Public Works have mentioned that a benefit is that there are currently trees that would shade the solar installation. Mr. Anderson noted that this is about the actual purchase of the property, not about the demolition, which is the intent at some point. He pointed out a fence that is a security concern for those parking in that area. A conceptual layout was presented.

Mr. Anderson reported that Manchester NEXT talks about expanding services within the library and parking is associated with that. This item is posted on the Board of Directors' agenda for tomorrow night.

Mr. Shanbaum stated that he is concerned because it did not go to the Cheney Commission. If any federal funds are used in the purchase, it would trigger Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act, which requires procedures that have not yet been gone through. In his opinion, the Commission does not have enough information to know whether the proper procedures have been followed so far.

Mr. Anderson stated that this will be 100% local money, so there should be no issue with the fund Mr. Shanbaum mentioned.

Mr. Reichelt commented that he was on the Library Building Committee and a lot of effort went into trying to get the parking lot directly behind the neighboring building. Considering the amount being put into this new library, it would be a good idea to obtain the subject property to optimize parking.

Ms. Luna noted that, in her time on the Commission, the Town went through the same process to purchase 33 Eldridge Street. She asked about the number of parking spaces after the purchase of 33 Eldridge Street.

Mr. Mark Rizzo, Interim Director of Public Works, stated that with the purchase of 29 Eldridge Street, they would add an additional 20 parking spots to the overall projected parking.

After a question from Mr. Stebe, Ms. Bertotti stated that this parcel is 0.24 acres and does not require an erosion and sediment control plan unless this is related to a use that would require a review. This may not come back before the Commission. If the main site received a special exception approval, this would be a modification.

Ms. Luna recalled that, when 33 Eldridge Street was before the Commission, the buffer was modified. She asked whether there would be a fence or a landscaped buffer.

Mr. Anderson responded that they only have a concept at this time. If the buffer needs to be changed, it will have to come before the Commission.

Mandatory Referral (MR-0002-2026)

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to issue a favorable report regarding the purchase of 29 Eldridge Street. Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion. Mr. Stebe, Ms. Luna,

Ms. Ike, Mr. Reichelt, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Prause, Mr. Schoeneberger, and Ms. Ahsan voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Shanbaum voted against the motion. The motion passed eight to one.

The reason for issuing a favorable report is that the purchase of the property will provide additional off-street parking for the new library currently under construction. The Board has been seeking additional options for parking in and around the vicinity of the library and a preliminary concept layout indicates the property would allow for an additional 30 parking spaces and address a safety concern related to the currently proposed fence location.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 4, 2026 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the minutes as written. Ms. Ike seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

May 18, 2026 – Public Hearing/Business Meeting

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to approve the minutes as written. Mr. Schoeneberger seconded the motion. Mr. Stebe, Mr. Shanbaum, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Prause, Mr. Schoeneberger, and Ms. Ahsan voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Luna, Mr. Reichelt, and Ms. Ike abstained. The motion passed six to zero.

RECEIPT OF NEW APPLICATIONS

1. **SINGH REALTY GROUP LLC – Inland Wetland Permit (IWP-0032-2026); Special Exception (PSE-0052-2026); Erosion & Sedimentation Control Plan (ESC-0028-2026)** – Request a special exception under Art. II, Sec 4.2 and Art. III, Sec. 9.4.2A and B for proposed construction of an 8,100 SF office building to be used as the operational hub for Apache Trucking with accessory garage space and designated trailer spaces at 51 Commerce Road.
2. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0029-2026)** – Provide Separate Zones for Silk Mill and Family Mansion Areas.
3. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zone Change (ZC-0008-2026)** – Provide Separate Zones for Silk Mill and Family Mansion Areas.
4. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0030-2026)** – Proposed comprehensive amendments to the zoning regulations: Recommendation 9: Consolidate Business Zones and Update Permitted Uses.
5. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0031-2026)** – Proposed comprehensive amendments to the zoning regulations: Recommendation 10: Update Commercial, Industrial, and Mixed-Use Zoning District Standards.

6. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0032-2026)** – Proposed comprehensive amendments to the zoning regulations: Recommendation 11: Update Commercial Principal and Accessory Use Regulations.
7. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zoning Regulation Amendment (REG-0033-2026)** – Proposed comprehensive amendments to the zoning regulations: Recommendation 12: Public Act 25-1 Middle Housing Compliance.
8. **TOWN OF MANCHESTER PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION – Zone Change (ZC-0009-2026)** – Merge the B1 zone into the NB zone, except for 307 Highland Street. Merge the B2 and B3 zones into a new AB (Arterial Business) zone. Include 307 Highland Street into AB zone. Merge the B5 zone into the GB zone.
9. **JFB AUTO REPAIR + TIRE / COREY MEYER – Transfer Request (APA-001)** – Transfer request for 390 New State Road.

MOTION: Mr. Kennedy moved to close the business meeting. Mr. Shanbaum seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

The Business Meeting was closed at 11:35 P.M.

I certify these minutes were adopted on the following date:

June 15, 2026
Date

Michael Stebe, Chairperson

NOTICE: A DIGITAL RECORDING OF THIS BUSINESS MEETING CAN BE HEARD IN THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT.