



TOWN OF
CHESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

01011

PLANNING BOARD
15 Middlefield Road
Chester, MA 01011

Planning Board Meeting Minutes February 17th, 2026 at 4:00 pm
Chester Town Hall (Basement) COA Room 15 Middlefield Road, Chester, MA 01011

Meeting called to order at 4:06 PM by Elizabeth Massa, Chair.

Attendees:

Planning Board Members: Elizabeth Massa (EM) Chair, Muriel Hall (MH) Clerk, Bob Daley, (BD), Richard Holzman (RH), Nick Chiusano (NC), Veronica Marr (VM) Alternate

Guest: *Corey Milan, NB+C*

Agenda

Approve last meeting minutes of January 21st, 2026. Motion to approve the minutes as presented made by BD, second by RH. 5 Aye Votes.

New Business

- Cell Tower located at 97 Old State Highway: EM introduced Corey Milan, representative of NB+C, contracted operators for Verizon who is planning modifications to their cell tower located at 97 Old State Highway. The request for a technology change, reducing the current 15 transmitters to 6 transmitters. EM explained the Special Permit requirements per Chester Bylaws for any change to an existing Cell Tower. Requires notification of all abutters and surrounding towns, advertise in publication for two weeks prior to an established Public Hearing date. CM indicated he had all the necessary documents for review. RH questioned the camouflage style base color and if there would be any modifications. He also inquired as to the assessed value and tax obligation. EM shared that the assessor provided: New Cingular Wireless PCS, LLC owns the cell towers at 39 Sylvester Hamilton Rd and 65 Old State Highway. Assessed value for both \$246,163 and the tax is \$4,445.70. BD asked, what are the FCC requirements for Tower Radio Frequency Emissions Reporting and how often is it required? CM indicated the reporting can be provided anytime it is requested. EM will submit the application approved by the Planning Board and documents to the Town Clerk for Public Meeting posting. Once the hearing is conducted, a 20-day contest period is open, once passed, building and electrical permits can be pulled.

-Cell Tower Sylvester Hamilton Road review project status: EM reported the long quest for a response to concerns regarding the 39 Sylvester Hamilton has been answered. NB+C also has the management and operation service contact for the tower. A plan for the repair of the camouflage foliage and other issues are being addressed. A new Special Permitting application is required as the final inspection for original permit was never completed. RH applauded the news after his numerous attempts to get action. He also indicated that due to the timing, a copy of the Radio Frequency Emissions Report should also be requested prior to approval.

-Poultry bylaw proposed to allow chickens, acreage atty review: EM discussed comments and recommendations from the Town Attorney's review. There can be no Special Permitting requirements for property of 5 acres or more. No limitations. Additional language was recommended to define specifications and SP categories. Modified bylaw summary will be presented to the SB at the 2/23/2026 meeting for review. If approved a Public Hearing date will be set, estimated 3/18/2026.

-Community Pride Bylaw: It was recommended by PB members that the discussion of concerns and recommendations to minimize debris and junk creating health and safety issues that impact value of adjacent property and overall appearance be addressed at the same time the Parking issues in the village are addressed.

-Steets and Sidewalks general bylaw to BOS. Approved and presented to the SB for approval.

-Parking in the Village town ordinance: BD stressed the need to address the risks and concerns of blocking traffic on Maple St. Only 29ft wide from Route 20 for 682ft, Andrews Ave. is 37 ft wide with 45ft wide near Main St. Street access being blocked frequently on both sides is a reoccurring safety issues for all residents. Defining a parking ordinance that addresses specific recommendations, incorporates proper signing and posting is needed. This and the junk and debris violation both could require approving fines.

RH Made a motion to: Send a recommendation to the Town Administrator to draft a Village Parking Ordinance. To create an ad hoc committee including Police Chief, Fire Chief and town representatives to develop an ordinance to address Village Parking and Abandoned Vehicles. Motion 2nd, BD. 5 Aye votes.

-Review BESS bylaw draft and Town Counsel input: MH discussed the ongoing concerns and varied examples of surroundings towns and statewide legislation and BESS activity. A copy of the Model Zoning Bylaw: Allowing Use of Battery Energy Storage Systems prepared by the Energy Resources Dept was distributed for review. The current lack of CMELD infrastructure limits any implementation and allows us to proceed slowly with developing a BESS bylaw. The issue will continue to be reviewed and on our planning agenda.

-ADU adoption: Move to the future review and planning.

-Open Space and Recreation Plan renewal: Planning Board recommends the Town Administrator create a Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee. The plan is comprehensive and to be updated properly requires input from multiple sources. Some mentioned are the Wild and Scenic Westfield River, Conservation Committee, Planning Board and others. Last comprehensive plan was created in 2003, with an update in 2008.

-Fence bylaw: The current fence situation is the temporary barrier being taken down in spring. Results to be determined.

Planning for Upcoming Meetings

- Marijuana bylaw redo per town clerk*
- Rescind/update sub-division regulation, new storm water run-off regulation*
- Flood Plain bylaw*
- Driveway bylaw re slope/grade*
- Public Events on Private Property: tastings, weddings, etc.*

Public Comment

*There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by EM at 6:22pm, 2nd by VM.
5 Aye Votes.*

Minutes Submitted by: Muriel Hall, Clerk

_____ Date _____
Muriel Hall, Clerk

_____ Date _____
Elizabeth Massa, Chair

*Elizabeth Massa
approved 03-31-26*