

NEWINGTON ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Regular Meeting

January 8, 2026

Chairman Sharon Dunning called the regular meeting of the Newington Zoning Board of Appeals to order at 7:00 p.m.

I. **ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Present

Commissioner Bachand
Commissioner Donaluk
Chairman Dunning
Commissioner Kolokowski
Commissioner Lucas
Commissioner Houle
Commissioner Gormley-A

Commissioners Absent

None

Staff Present

Erik Hinckley, Asst. Town Planner, ZEO

II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

III. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Commissioner Donaluk nominated Chairman Dunning to serve as Chairman for a second term. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Lucas. After a roll call vote, Chairman Dunning was unanimously elected Chairman.

Commissioner Kolokowski was elected Vice-Chairman on a unanimous roll call vote. after being nominated by Chairman Dunning and the nomination seconded by Commissioner Bachand.

Commissioner Lucas was elected Secretary after a unanimous roll call vote being nominated by Commissioner Bachand and the nomination seconded by Commissioner Kolokowski.

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IN NEWINGTON CT
2026 JAN 14 PM 12:04
Sharon O. Dunning
Town Clerk

IV. SETTING OF MEETING DATES

Chairman Dunning: We'll move on, to the setting of the regular meeting dates for this year. It will still be the first Thursday of the month, the same as we have been meeting, is that correct?

Erik Hinckley: Yes, nothing has changed, the time hasn't changed, the location hasn't changed, and the day of the month that we typically meet has not changed. There are a couple of holidays that are noted, we'll see how that goes, if we have to relocate that. I don't change them right away because ZBA typically does not meet more than four or five times a year, so those are the meeting dates we set.

Feb. 5	March 5	April 2	May 7	June 4	July 2
Aug 6	Sept 3	Oct 1	Nov 5	Dec 3	Jan 7, 2027

Commissioner Lucas: EDC is the second Thursday right, because I remember that last night we changed to Thursday. I just want to make sure that we are not.....

Erik Hinckley: No, there is no conflict because I run both so.....

Commissioner Lucas: I just wanted to make sure because I remember that we were talking about that last night.

Chairman Dunning: And you can't be in two places at the same time.

Erik Hinckley: Not without cloning technology.

Chairman Dunning: Can I get a motion to accept the calendar for 2026.

Commissioner Lucas: Move to accept the meeting dates as the first Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m. going forward except for those noted holidays. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kolokowski. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion with five voting YEA.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chairman Dunning: We have the minutes of the last meeting and we just need a vote of approval. Did everybody get a chance to look them over?

Commissioner Bachand: I did not.

Erik Hinckley: If you don't think you have enough votes you can table them.

Commissioner Bachand: How many votes do we need? Three out of five?

Erik Hinckley: To approve them, but if you feel that you haven't read them, then.....

Chairman Dunning: I feel that we probably should table them.

Erik Hinckley: That's fine. You will need a motion to table them

Commissioner Lucas moved to table the minutes of the previous meeting until the February 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Donaluk. The vote was unanimously in favor of the motion, with five voting YEA.

Commissioner Bachand: So there was no note for us to look for those, they are always there and we should know that.

Erik Hinckley: The e-mail that goes out to you that says that the agenda is posted, you can hit the link and you can view all of the stuff that you would normally get in the packet. It's always there, so even before you get the packet, when you see that came in, you can hit the link and you will be able to pull up all of the documents, you just won't have the hard copies.

Commissioner Bachand: If we're not getting them, there should be a note there to.....

Erik Hinckley: Typically if there is not an application you're not getting a full packet.

Chairman Dunning: Now we have a couple of things. There was the letter and there is nothing on the agenda to bring that in, and then public participation.

Erik Hinckley: I can just talk about it. I drafted a letter, per your request, Sharon reviewed it, this went to TPZ asking them to consider altering the regulations in regards to the setback for side yards and typically that is what we get the most applications on lately. They said, they seemed amenable to it, said they would look into it, they are also looking for potential suggestions from you as to how you might want to see it changed.

Commissioner Bachand: So this was for pre-existing non-conforming.

Erik Hinckley: So this is like for a garage that was built with the five yard setback, the property got re-zoned from R-10 to R-12 and now it is a ten yard setback and now somebody wants to put a second floor just like the last two applications we have had, so now they have to come before ZBA because we have no language that discusses how you deal with that. Some towns

do have, it's just automatic or they have language in their regulations that a vertical extension is not an expansion and they will accept that and I think one town even says you just have to meet the existing pitch roof of line of the house. So again, different towns have different things. They are again looking for potential suggestions to maybe get around it. You can consider that going forward and.....

Chairman Dunning: Did they say how much time we have to respond back to them, like maybe a month or something?

Erik Hinckley: I mean, that will be fine, any change like that will be a text amendment process, they would have to go through a public hearing, etc. so it's not like they can just say, hey we're fixing it, it's done.

Commissioner Bachand: Can you find us some examples of the towns that do that? In my opinion, it was all Commissioner Cain that brought all that controversy to that application. To me, it's simple enough. You get the application, you can say, okay, this is simple enough, I don't know that it really needs to go to TPZ but if we want it to, then we should have something to compare it to. If it is simple enough, we can just do that, What do we get, one application a year?

Erik Hinckley: I think the last couple of years we have had like three or four total for this same situation. The current R-12 zone comprises about thirty-five percent of all properties in town and that is where you have the problem because they used to be what they call an R-10 zone and had a five yard setback. So anything that was built like that with a garage or even the house, it's built up to the line.

Commissioner Bachand: Just thinking out loud, we would probably only approve it if there was already an existing footprint there like, in other words, if the house was ten feet away now, we're not going to let them go up five feet.

Erik Hinckley: This is exactly what it is for, to try to not have somebody go through that process potentially if what they want to increase had a prior permit and met the setback requirements at the time it was built, and it has been re-zoned, why are we doing this? Those are potential things to consider.

Commissioner Bachand: I think like you said, along the lines of the vertical expansion, existing footprint.

Erik Hinckley: Again that is for you to consider and I will look through, I did this a couple of years ago I think, I'll look through and pull out any stuff that I found about that in the past, push it

out to you and if there is something that you think you want to mimic or whatever you like or don't like, I can craft.....

Commissioner Bachand: We always copy Wethersfield so, that was our mother town.

Erik Hinckley: I will get something out to you in the next week or so.

There are at least two applications I think that are potentially in the works, I've talked to two people in the last couple of months, and we'll see what happens, if they actually come forward, maybe three.

The only other things I'll be getting out in the next few weeks or month is what you need to do for your training. I'll send a link, it's UConn Clear, it's the Land Use Commissioner training modules, I think there are four.

Commmissioner Bachand: If we did it for Wetlands, do we have to do it for.....

Commissioner Bachand: If you have done it for wetlands, do we have to.....

Erik Hinckley: Currently you are not required to do it for Wetlands, because currently you are not required to do it for Wetlands. Wetlands has their own training, but they may, I've heard they may incorporate the land use training into Wetlands as well, so you may

Commissioner Bachand: I thought I did that, but maybe I did it for this Commission.

Erik Hinckley: You probably did it for ZBA, but I'll look and see who is up and what you need to do.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

Commissioner Donaluk: A little off the subject, what is the current situation with the Town Center Plan?

Erik Hinckley: The Town Center Plan was adopted by the Council, so I believe the next step, I believe there is funding left and we are going to look at hiring a parking consultant, I'm not quite sure on that, just to look at the municipal lot and the general parking in the area, and then the next steps will be looking at recommended regulation changes, and how we can get what we want and can control the development in the downtown and that will have to go through the Planning and Zoning Commission to do text amendments to the regulations or create a floating zone potentially, for the town center. There are a few different options that they can utilize to get that ready. That way, when a developer comes forward they know what we are looking for, they are not just going to come throw a plan out and say, here, here's what we are doing. It's along

the lines of getting some control over how that is built and constructed and how it is going to look like and stuff like that.

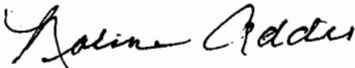
Commissioner Donaluk: Are they done with the public meetings at this point?

Erik Hinckley: Yes, the next public meetings would occur when there is a text amendment before the Planning and Zoning Commission or anything for a zone change. Those would all require a public hearing.

VII. ADJOURN

Commissioner Lucas moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Donaluk. The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Norine Addis".

Norine Addis,
Recording Secretary