

TOWN OF PLYMOUTH
PLANNING COMMISSION AND
ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT
OCTOBER 6, 2026 MINUTES

The October 6, 2026 meeting of the Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment was called to order at 6:00 PM.

Board members in attendance were Bruce Pauley, Frank Vetere, Keith Cappellini, Mike Scmillio, Anne Brown, Jay Kullman, and Jeff Sailer.

Kyle Katz attended as our Town Planner from Two Rivers Ottauquechee Regional Commission.

Audience members in attendance were Bob and Pat Lambert, Dave and Linda Olster, Josh Rourke, Rose Vetere, Don and Kathie Spruck, Randy and Mona Di Stefano, Georgiana Whalen, David and Terry Sheldon, and Jim Allen.

Zoom participants were Deb O'Loughlin and Willow Bascom

Keith Cappellini made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 1, 2026 meeting, Anne Brown seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Since there were several people in the audience who attended as interested parties in the Conditional Use hearings on the agenda, Chairman Bruce Pauley administered the required oath corporately, rather than individually.

Our Town Plan Update public forum was first on the agenda. Kyle Katz gave a presentation regarding what a town plan is, why it matters, and the reason for updating it every 8 years.

- He explained the Town Plan is a long-term vision for the community and provides a basis for local decision making.
- There are required core elements of a town plan, such as VSA §4302, which states the goals and general purposes of a Town Plan, and VSA §4382 which is consistent with the goals of the Land Use Planning Law, established in VSA §4302 and includes all of the elements that a town plan needs to be compatible with approved plans of other municipalities in the region and with the Regional Plan.
- The plan is where the community puts its values to paper, in the form of goals, policies, and recommendations.
- Three of the 15 state planning goals were given as examples:
Goal # 1 "To plan development to maintain the historic settlement pattern of a compact village separated by rural countryside."
Goal # 11 "To ensure availability of safe and affordable housing for all Vermonters."
Goal # 12 "To plan for, finance, and provide an efficient system of public facilities and services to meet future needs."
- A core component of the town plan are the goals, policies, and recommendations that make up a portion of each chapter of the Town Plan.
- There are several processes in which the town plan can have an effect in regulatory proceedings. Act 250 is a state level permit for major development and sub-divisions. Development seeking Act 250 permitting must conform with the goals and policies of the town. Those policies must be clear, binding, and unambiguous to hold weight in Act 250.

- Sections 248 and 248A are the permitting processes through the Public Utility Commission (PUC) for new energy facilities (Section 248), and telecommunication facilities (Section 248A). The PUC must give “due consideration” or “substantial deference” to recommendations in the Town Plan.
- Generally, the 3 most important chapters for language used in the proceedings are Land Use (Act 250), Energy (Sect. 248) and Utilities & Facilities (248A).

Next, the audience was invited to make comments or ask questions. Issues discussed were:

- The Coolidge Historical site looking neglected, what can the town do about it? Does the Selectboard have jurisdiction over the site?
- Jay Kullman responded the town does not have jurisdiction. The State of Vermont owns and manages the Coolidge site. Wetlands on the site have not been managed as they have in the past. What was once pasture is now grown up with vegetation. Trees have not been pruned and some are dying.
- Will proposed changes to the town plan will be disclosed in advance, so the public may comment on those changes?
- Kyle responded that a draft of the revised Plymouth Town Plan showing updates and changes from the existing plan that was adopted in 2019 will be available to the public. Before the Town Plan is approved by the Planning Commission, a formal hearing will be warned, seeking public comment. [Additionally, Planning Commission meetings regarding Town Plan revisions are open to the public for public comment].
- Flood Resilience and Regulations were discussed. Questions from neighbors who have previously experienced residential flooding asked if there might be help with the area of Patch Brook and Dublin Road.
- Jay responded that all culverts have been upsized. In the past grants and FEMA funds have provided financial assistance, but long term, he said, that area needs a bigger bridge. One property owner expressed concern that property might be lost during that process and asked if the placement of the bridge could be adjusted to protect private property and allow flood waters the access needed.

After handing out the Town Plan survey to the audience, a question was asked regarding where the Village areas are located in the town. Kyle pointed out those 2 areas on the Plymouth Land Use map, one in Tyson and the other at Plymouth Union.

With no further questions, the Public Forum portion of the meeting was closed at 6:38 PM

The first hearing on the agenda was for Randall and Mona Di Stefano of 62 Dublin Road. They need Conditional Use approval for a Rural Small Enterprise so they can move forward in obtaining approval from the State of Vermont to operate as a licensed commercial kitchen. This would allow them to expand their pasta production so they can supply local stores and co-ops with their product. They have converted a storage room within their home to a small kitchen. Their equipment consists of a commercial pasta machine and two pasta dryers. They will install a 3 bay sink along with any other improvements required by the state. A stove is not required for pasta production.

Since their house is a non-conforming structure, located within the property set-backs for the Village Zone, a Variance is also needed. It was noted that their proposed commercial kitchen will not increase the non-conformity of the parcel.

A board member asked if they plan to hire employees, will there be an increase in the parking footprint, and will delivery trucks be coming to the property.

The applicants responded they will be the only employees and will deliver the pasta products they sell to local vendors. There will be no increase in vehicle traffic or parking.

Also, a question was asked regarding how much water they will use on a daily basis. They stated they can only produce 32 pounds of pasta a day. The amount of water necessary is minimal.

The hearing was closed at 6:44 PM.

The second hearing on the agenda was for John and Kim Abate regarding property located at 1634 Scout Camp Road. They were represented by applicant Josh Rourke of ID3 Designs. He stated their plans are to expand the kitchen and living room, attach the house to the barn, rebuild the deck, and update the exterior. The work would result in a small addition off the front and side of the house. There will be no change of elevation to the building. He submitted Site Plans showing architect's drawings, property lines, driveway and set-backs.

The only reason for the hearing is the property is within the Shoreland Overlay and the project is within 250' of the Shoreland.

He applied for a Shoreland Permit and submitted an email from Lake & Shoreland Ecologist Misha Cetner stating he should anticipate receiving email approval. The email also stated that before beginning this project, he should contact Rebecca Chalmers, the regional wetland program ecologist, to help clarify whether this project area interacts with the Wetlands Rules.

Josh stated they plan to begin work as soon as possible after approval by the Planning Commission and hope to complete the project by July 4, 2027. The board chairman pointed out that a 15 - day comment period is required once approval is granted.

With no further questions or comments from the board, the hearing was closed at 6:48 PM.

Third on the agenda was Georgiana Whalen of 78 Dublin Road. This application was referred to the board as the property needs a Variance as the structure is within the side and road setbacks within the Village Zone.

She explained that her house was built in 1984, that in winter, she cannot use her front door, as it is blocked by snow coming off the roof. While the front door does not face the road, it does face her neighbors at 62 Dublin Rd. and is within the side set-back. She would like to add a covered porch, that would direct snow away from her front entrance and have a stair from ground level to the porch floor. It was noted the house was built before the road was as wide as it is now, and the steps would increase the non-conformity by a small amount, approximately 1'.

The hearing closed at 6:52 PM.

The fourth hearing was held regarding a request from the Plymouth Fire Department to install a Dry Hydrant in a Right of Way off Scott Terrace Rd. Fire Department Captain, Jim Allen, said that after the December 2024 fire that destroyed 2 houses on Echo Lake, off Scott Terrace, some of the property owners in the area requested that the fire department install a dry hydrant. He explained the process of installing a dry hydrant for fire protection.

He stated an application for a Lake Encroachment Permit was submitted on September 16, 2026, however, the application is now on hold, as the Scott Terrace Association is undecided on moving forward.

A Vermont Association of Conservation Districts Grant Agreement with the Plymouth Fire Department to provide up to \$10,000 on a reimbursement basis with the Scott Terrace Association providing 25% of the match (\$3333.33) is in effect from September 1, 2026 until November 1, 2026. The board agreed to continue the hearing in case the Scott Terrace property owners decided to move forward.

The hearings were adjourned at 7:03 PM. Deliberations began at 7:10 PM.

Regarding the DiStefano hearing, the board members commented that what the property owner wants to do is great, as it compliments other commercial businesses in the Village Zone. They noted there would be no increase of traffic or parking issues as the business is owner operated, and the owners will be delivering their product to businesses. They just need the Plymouth Zoning permit in order to get state approval for a commercial enterprise.

Jay Kullman made a motion to approve their Conditional Use application for a Rural Small Enterprise. Jeff Sailer seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Next Jay Kullman made a motion to approve a Variance for a non-conforming parcel, as the applicants will not be increasing their non-conformity. Anne Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor.

On the second hearing for John and Kim Abate, the board acknowledged the application is complete with the exception of final approval from the Agency of Natural Resources regarding their Shoreland Project Registration Application.

Anne Brown made a motion to approve the Conditional Use application for construction of an addition to connect the existing house and barn, with the Condition they receive final approval for the Shoreland Project Permit application that was submitted to the Agency of Natural Resources. Frank Vetere seconded the motion.

Following further discussion regarding a mapped Class II wetland area noted on the email from Misha Cetner, Lake & Shoreland Ecologist to Josh Rourke, on which Rebecca Chalmers, Wetlands Program Ecologist was copied, all board members voted unanimously to approve the application.

Next the board deliberated the application of Georgiana Whalen for a Variance to allow her to construct an enclosed porch at her front door which is located on the right side of her house. The steps she would need in order to reach the porch would extend into the front setback by approximately 1' and will increase her non-conformity.

Given the difficulties she encounters each winter because snow blocks her ability to access her front door, the board approved her application. Jeff Sailer made a motion to approve the application for an enclosed front porch. Anne Brown seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The board then discussed the application by the Plymouth Fire Department to install a dry hydrant for fire protection, within a Right of Way between 171 & 177 Scott Terrace. The application was placed on hold on Friday, October 2, 2026 by a property owner.

After discussion, the board agreed to approve the application subject to receiving approval from the Agency of Natural Resources for a Lake Encroachment Permit. If the property owners decide to move forward, and the grant still remains active, the Fire Department will be able to proceed.

Keith Cappellini made a motion to approve the installation of a Dry Hydrant subject to approval of the project from ANR. Frank Vetere seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Jeff Sailer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 PM. All seconded the motion and were in favor.

Respectfully submitted, as draft,

Elaine Pauley, Secretary
Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Adjustment
Town of Plymouth

10/6/2026