Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Swanzey Planning Board
Meeting Minutes – November 5, 2026
Whitcomb Hall, Main Street, Swanzey, NH

CALL TO ORDER:
The meeting of the Swanzey Planning Board was called to order at 6:00pm by Chair Victoria Ames. The meeting was held at Whitcomb Hall. Other members present: Michael York, Richard Lane, Mark Scalera, Jane Johnson, Charlie Harbeck, and Selectman's Representative Alan Gross. Also present was Director of Planning Adam Paquette.

The Chair called the roll and read the agenda for the evening. A quorum was present.

Absent:
Stacy Goodale, Scott Self, Brandon Self

SEATING ALTERNATES:
The chair seated Charlie Harbeck for Scott Self and Jane Johnson for Brandon Self

Others Present:

MINUTES:
The meeting minutes of October 22, 2026 were considered. A motion was made by Michael York to approve the meeting minutes as presented. There was a second by Jane Johnson. All were in favor. Corrections were presented by Chair Ames, the motion passed.

Corrections:
- Chair Ames represented the proposed pathway as a way to preserve the proposed landscaping.
- Chair Ames presented the removal of summer wine ninebark as a way to make way for a proposed pathway.
- Governmental uses on page 6, third bullet point under 10 needs to be revisited.

REGIONAL IMPACT
A motion was made by Lane that there was no regional impact. There was a second by Scalera. All were in favor. With no further discussion, the motion passed.

APPLICATIONS AND PUBLIC HEARING(S):
None

Discussions and Other Business:
- **Amendment Discussion**
  - Ames starts by going over her recommended changes**,** which staff has made, but tweaked slightly to still comply with RSAs
  - Ames reads the amendments in order.
  - York asks a question about if the note will be visible on the warrant, Paquette answers yes.
  - **The board votes by consensus to accept Amendment 1.** The amendment reads:

Amendment No. 1 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1, as proposed by the Planning Board, to replace Section IX of the Swanzey Zoning Ordinance with the New Hampshire Office of Planning and Development's "Model D" Floodplain Management Ordinance, keeping Swanzey's existing higher standards and updating all related references throughout the ordinance?

Note: This amendment aligns Swanzey's floodplain management ordinance with federal and state standards. This action protects property, secures continued resident access to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), and preserves the town's existing, more stringent local protections.

The full language of this amendment is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's office.

- **The board votes by consensus to accept Amendment 2.** The amendment reads:

Amendment No. 2 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2, as proposed by the Planning Board, to amend the Swanzey Zoning Ordinance to incorporate amended and consolidated definitions throughout the entire ordinance, giving each land use one name and one definition?

Note: This amendment is a housekeeping measure designed to eliminate redundant, conflicting, or vague terms by establishing uniform definitions across all sections of the zoning regulations.

The full language of this amendment is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's office.

- **The board votes by consensus to accept Amendment 3.** The amendment reads:

Amendment No. 3 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 3, as proposed by the Planning Board, to amend in its entirety Swanzey Zoning Ordinance Section III-AA, which regulates Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), and thereby to bring related local regulations into compliance with state statutory standards?

Note: This amendment completely updates Section III-AA to align Swanzey's Accessory Dwelling Unit regulations with current New Hampshire statutory standards.

The full language of this amendment is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's office.

- **The board votes by consensus to accept Amendment 4.** The amendment reads:

Amendment No. 4 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 4, as proposed by the Planning Board, to incorporate Section III-C into the Swanzey Zoning Ordinance to regulate family day care homes, family group day care homes, and child care centers, and to insert all related references throughout the ordinance?

Note: This amendment creates a dedicated section in the zoning ordinance to clearly define and regulate where and how different types of childcare facilities can operate in Swanzey, ensuring alignment with state statutes.

The full language of this amendment is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's Office.

- Ames asks if some language in the note for Amendment 4 can be repeated in Amendments 5 and 6. Paquette accepts.
- Lane speaks about agriculture uses and definitions. York speaks about state law. Lane asks to reference RSA language and Ames states that it is listed in the newly proposed section.
- Johnson speaks about potential issues by agricultural uses in the residence district.
- **The board votes by consensus to accept Amendment 5.** The amendment reads:

Amendment No. 5 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 5, as proposed by the Planning Board, to incorporate Section III-D into the Swanzey Zoning Ordinance to regulate agricultural uses, and to insert all related references throughout the ordinance?

Note: This amendment creates a dedicated section in the zoning ordinance to clearly define and guide farming and agricultural operations, ensuring local regulations align with state protections.

The full language of this amendment is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's office.

- **The board votes by consensus to accept Amendment 6.** The amendment reads:

Amendment No. 6 Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 6, as proposed by the Planning Board, to incorporate Section III-E into the Swanzey Zoning Ordinance to regulate multi-family dwellings and the adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and to insert all related references throughout the ordinance?

Note: This amendment creates a dedicated section in the zoning ordinance to align with state law, allowing multi-family housing in commercial zones,

provided there is adequate infrastructure, and the project passes local site plan review. It also promotes adaptive reuse by exempting existing buildings from setback, height, and frontage rules during conversion, as long as the original footprint and height do not increase.

The full language of this amendment is available for inspection at the Town Clerk's office.

- **Accessory Dwelling Unit**
  - Ames asks if the pre-emptive headings should be included, Paquette disagrees saying that it doesn't fit the rest of the ordinance structure. Paquette and Ames discuss that it could be revisited next year.
  - Lane asks about converting existing structures and whether the Board would see it. Paquette states it would come before the building department.
  - Paquette will add remaining text in Section II-AA.
- **Day care discussion**
  - Ames starts to discuss the proposed Section III-C.
  - Ames asks about adding "Child Care Center as defined in Section XIII" to that section.
  - The Board accepts through consensus. The language is as follows:

1. Child care centers, as defined in Section XIII, shall be permitted and regulated in accordance with RSA 674:81, as amended

- **Agricultural uses discussion**
  - The Board accepts through consensus. The language is as follows:

SECTION III-D
AGRICULTURAL USES

Agricultural operations and activities shall be permitted and regulated in accordance with RSA 672:1, RSA 674:32-a through RSA 674:32-d, and the definitions of farm, agriculture, and farming contained in RSA 21:34-a. The tilling of soil and the growing and harvesting of crops and horticultural commodities, as either a primary or accessory use, shall be permitted in all zoning districts.

- **Multi-family discussion**
  - Paquette discusses changes to density limits. The Board discusses.
  - Ames discusses the RSA that regulates this section
  - York discusses water supply
  - Ames suggests an addition to Section III-E – D to show pedestrian safety
  - Paquette will send new draft before hearing. The proposed language with pedestrian safety language will read as follows:

1. Developments shall demonstrate the potential impact on local vehicle and pedestrian traffic by submitting data showing existing conditions and

expected traffic generation. The Planning Board may require a formal traffic impact study in accordance with NH RSA 674:80, I(a), as amended.

- **General**
  - Add agriculture and farming as permitted in every district. Paquette will amend districts to show this.
- **Code of Conduct**
  - Ames discusses the code of conduct document approved by the Select Board.
  - Ames discusses that members of the Planning Board are elected officials and the Select Board does not have the authority to impose these standards. Ames submits a letter to the Select Board.
  - The Board discusses further.
  - Lane asks about a line from the Select Board minutes.
  - Scalera states the code of conduct was not as comprehensive as it could have been.

- Gross and Paquette discuss the previous public hearing, regarding the post office traffic, specifically large trucks accessing the post office and the Planning Board's request to amend the site plan to revert back to previous conditions. Paquette states that refuting expert evidence (in this case the DOT driveway permit) must come from the Board's own expert source and must not come from anecdotal evidence. The Board discussed and will revisit further if needed.

ADJOURNMENT
A motion to adjourn was made by Scalera. There was a second to the motion by Harbeck with further discussion regarding CIPC from York. All were in favor and the m*otion passed.* Adjournment occurred at 7:40pm.

Next Meeting: November 19, 2026

Respectfully Submitted,
Adam Paquette, Director of Planning & Community Development
Approved on November 19, 2026