

What does the Planning Board Do?

Planning Boards have a wide range of responsibilities. The following are their major jobs:



1. *Propose amendments of Town documents and hold hearings for public input:*
 - Lyme's Master Plan
 - Zoning Ordinance
 - Subdivision Regulations
 - Site Plan Review Regulations
 - Curb Cut Regulations (for new driveways on Town roads)
 - Excavation Regulations (gravel)
2. *Review subdivision, site plan, curb cut, excavation, and conditional use applications.*

What is a Subdivision?

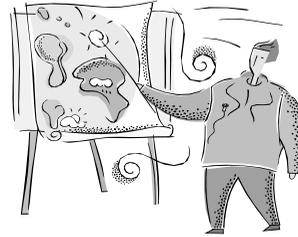
A subdivision is the division of real property into two or more parts. This could be a lot or it could be a building subdivided into condominiums. In Lyme, a lot line adjustment is also considered a type of subdivision. This is when someone enlarges his or her lot by annexing a



piece of land from a neighbor's lot. A hearing is required to subdivide.

What is a Site Plan and when do I Need a Hearing?

A site plan is a design for a proposal related to multi-dwelling or non-residential use. The design must address such issues as drainage, erosion control during construction, lighting, snow storage, garbage removal locations, parking, traffic flow, and other site specific issues.



A site plan hearing is required for Planning Board review of 1.) All new principal and accessory buildings for multi-dwelling and non-residential use; 2.) additions of more than 500 square feet or 10% of floor area, whichever is less, to existing multi-dwelling and non-residential principal and accessory buildings; 3.) a change in use or layout of multi-dwelling or non-residential property or building(s) which involves changes in traffic flow; parking; drainage; water, sewer, or other utilities; fuel storage; or toxic material storage; and 4.) cottage industries.

What are Conditional Use Approvals and When do I Need One?

A Conditional Use Approval is an approval granted by the Planning Board for a change in use of a property during a noticed public hearing. Table 4.1 of the Zoning Ordinance lists the specific permitted uses and those requiring a conditional use approval by zoning district. Most changes of use also require a Site Plan Review, and you may be able to have both hearings at the same time. Check out Article XII in the zoning ordinance to see how the Planning Board will review a conditional use approval application.



Preparing an Application

Your first step should be a visit to the Planning & Zoning Administrator. After this visit, if you feel it would be helpful, you can also meet informally with the Planning Board to discuss your plans. The Planning & Zoning Administrator will schedule this meeting for you. When you meet with the Planning Board informally, you cannot present *new* plans or surveys—this would require a public hearing.

Once you feel comfortable proceeding with your proposal, you will need to

complete the appropriate application. You may need a professional such as a licensed surveyor to assist you. Copies of the appropriate regulations and applications are available on-line at www.LymeNH.gov or in the Town offices for a small fee.

When you have a complete application including a list of abutters and interest holders (available at town offices) and have paid your fees, the Planning & Zoning Administrator will schedule your public hearing with the Planning Board. Your complete application package must be submitted at least 15 days in advance of a hearing.

How does the Hearing Work?

The Planning & Zoning Administrator will provide your Application and all relevant documents to each Planning Board member. A public hearing will be scheduled. The Planning Board typically meets on the second and fourth Thursday evenings of the month. The Planning & Zoning Administrator must send certified notices of the hearing to your property's abutters and interest holders and post notices in Town.

The first step for the Planning Board at the hearing is to carefully review your application to make sure you have met

the requirements of the appropriate application. If it does not, the Planning Board will discuss how you can meet the requirements. At this point, if there are several items missing and they are not waived by the Planning Board, the Board may deny your application, and a list of the missing elements will be provided to you within six days. If it does meet the application requirements, they deem the application complete and move on to discuss the merits of the proposal itself.

Now comes the interesting part. The applicant presents the application, and the public is allowed to comment. Once the abutters and other interested parties have had a chance to speak, the Planning Board members will go into deliberations to discuss the case. The applicant and public are typically not allowed to participate at this point as they've already had their turn. However, anyone is welcome to remain and hear the discussion.

Once the Board feels comfortable with their determination, they will make a formal decision to approve or deny the application. Any approval may be conditioned to require that modifications be made to the plan,

approvals be obtained from the State, or whatever is relevant to the case. Sometimes, a case may be complicated, and it must to be continued on to another night. Please remember, the Board has not previously discussed an application before the hearing.

Please do not contact the Planning Board Members or Alternates to discuss your case. They cannot legally discuss your application outside of a hearing, and an individual member cannot speak for the Board.

Who is on the Planning Board?

The Planning Board is a group of residents from Lyme. You may know some of them. They volunteer their time to listen to cases like yours, and assist you in achieving your goals within the framework of Town regulations and the zoning ordinance. Four members are elected at Town Meeting, and one is from the Selectboard. Alternates are designated by the Planning Board.



Questions?

Feeling stressed about the hearing process? Call the Planning & Zoning Administrator to answer any questions you might have. Remember, please do not contact Planning Board members.

Planning Board Members

Jack Elliott
John Billings
Stephanie Clark
Michelle Balch
Dick Jones, Select Board Representative
Don Dwight, Alternate
Ben Kilham, Alternate
David Roby, Alternate

Planning & Zoning Administrator

Victoria Davis

Planning & Zoning Office Hours

Wednesday & Friday 9 AM - 12:30 PM
or by Appointment
603/795-4639

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Town of Lyme Planning Board



**Your Guide to the
Planning Board and
Hearing Process**