

City of Laconia
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Monday, December 15, 2025 - 6:30 PM
City Hall Conference Room 200A

12/15/2025 – Draft Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

M. DellaVecchia calls the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

2. ROLL CALL

Chair Michael DellaVecchia, Marcia Hayward, Jane Laroche, Richard Boddie, Tarra Sorell, Tim Whitney, and Councilor Eric Hoffman are present.

3. RECORDING SECRETARY

Greyson Draper, Planning Technician

4. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Robert Mora, Planning Director

Greyson Draper, Planning Technician

5. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

M. Hayward motions to accept the corrected minutes as posted. J. Laroche seconds the motion. Unanimous. The minutes are accepted as posted.

6. EXTENSIONS

7. CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARINGS, CONSIDERATION AND POSSIBLE VOTE Note: The Purpose Of This Agenda Section Is For The Board To Continue The Public Hearing For The Applicant And The Public To Provide Input. The Board May Also Deliberate The Application, Decide And Conduct A Final Vote At This Time.

7.I. ZB2026-017 371 White Oaks Rd

The applicant is seeking a Variance to allow for multiple uses on a single lot of record.

R. Boddie Recuses himself.

Dari Sassan and Jeremy Fisher of Brown Engineering present the application.

M. Hayward asks where the nearby cluster developments were referred to in the presentation. D. Sassan answers Lady of the Lakes. R. Mora shares that both Lady of the Lakes and Paugus Woods are cluster developments on White Oaks Rd. which are in RR1. M. DellaVecchia asks if someone will live in the home on the proposed campground and if they will run it. D. Sassan answers that is the applicant's intent. T. Mahoney will continue to live in the residence and act as the caretaker of the campground. M. Hayward explains that presentation mentioned that the campground complements the historic, scenic, and agricultural values of that district. She asks how this proposal complements historic values. D. Sassan answers he feels that part of celebrating the city's history is creating opportunities for visitors to enjoy the city.

Councilor Hoffman asks if the campground will be connected to public sewer but not public water. D. Sassan confirms this is correct. Councilor Hoffman clarifies that the sewer main they plan to connect is not existing. J. Fisher, the project designer and engineer, confirms that this is correct. He explains that they are working on that with DPW. This project would allow the applicant to further tie into the proposed sewer system. Currently,

they are on septic. If this project is approved, they can then divert all that sewage from the ground and into the actual sewage system. Councilor Hoffman asks what the construction timeline will be. J. Fisher answers that the timeline would be up to the owner. T. Mahoney responds that he would like to begin construction as soon as possible and to be operational by the beginning of summer.

Councilor Hoffman sites that the plans say the force main that they are planning to connect to will not be installed until the summer. T. Mahoney responds that he is not sure yet regarding the construction timeline and beginning work. Those details are still being worked on. M. Hayward asks about the water plans for the campground. She asks if they have wells. J. Fisher answers that they have multiple existing wells on site and that there is enough capacity for a small site like the one proposed. This is a very small-scale campground.

T. Sorell asks if there a limitation on the size of the RV's. J. Fisher answers that would be that would be decided by the owner, which could be a condition of approval as you see fit. D. Sassan confirms this and believes that RV's will be 400 sq ft and 30 ft in length or less. J. Fisher explains that he feels the sites could not support a manufactured home anyways.

M. Hayward asks if the campground will be seasonal or rent-and-go. T. Mahoney responds that plans to likely have a two-week maximum rental. There will be traffic in and out of the site. M. DellaVecchia asks about the location of the RV driveway. J. Fisher uses the plans to show the driveway to the board. M. DellaVecchia asks about the distance of the closest abutter, as they may be disturbed by incoming and outgoing RV traffic. T. Mahoney explains that they are abutted by conservation land with no existing homes.

M. DellaVecchia opens public comment at 6:47 PM.

Glenn Joyce opposes the application. He expresses concern about this application significantly changing the White Oaks Rd. neighborhood as previously approved variance already have. He feels this application conflicts with the purpose of the RR1 & RR2 zones.

Richard Boddie of 491 White Oaks Rd. opposes the application. This would be the first business on White Oaks Rd. White Oaks Rd. is already busy, now about 200 new living units have been constructed off of the road in the six years he has resided here. There are an additional 200 units being constructed which are connected to White Oaks Rd. as well. R. Boddie asks the board why White Oaks Rd. is seemingly bearing the brunt of Laconia's housing needs.

D. Sassan returns to the podium and explains that the applicant is not proposing housing. He also confirms with the board that G. Joyce and R. Boddie are not direct abutters to the subject property.

D. Sassan of Brown Engineering asks for a letter of support to be read into the minutes.

Ian Bird Abutter Letter:

Hi Troy and anybody reading,

Troy and I spoke today and walked some of his property to discuss his plans for campground as an abut and neighbor. I think his idea will be great for the area and I am happy with how organized Troy is and how well-kept his land is. Troy mentioned there may be future need to cross my land to connect to utilities. I am not opposed to this as long as I'm kept in the loop and my access from White Oaks Road onto my property is respected. I am aware that while that work takes place, I might temporarily lose that access. The city has a conservation easement on my property, so I'm sure the conservation department would need to be involved in that discussion as well. I look forward to seeing future progress and wish Troy all the best.

Ian Bird of 255 White Oaks Rd.

Thank you.

M. DellaVecchia closes public comment at 6:53 PM.

M. DellaVecchia invites discussion amongst the board. J. LaRoche is in favor of the application. She feels the campground could be an economic benefit for the area.

M. Hayward explains that she feels the campground could be located in another zone where it is permitted. She believes this campground would change the character of the neighborhood, as this would be the only business on White Oaks Rd. She is concerned about traffic and feels White Oaks Rd. is already very developed. She is not in favor of the application. Councilor Hoffman clarifies that this applicant's variance application is for mixed use and their special exception application is for the RV campground. M. Hayward confirms this.

Councilor Hoffman clarifies that to deny a special exception application, the application must violate one of the specific special exception criteria. M. Hayward questions if the applicant would continue with their special exception application if their variance application were denied. Councilor Hoffman explains that he is sensitive to the plight of the people on White Oaks Rd. The ZBA receives an application for a property on White Oaks Rd. every meeting. He feels that there is undeveloped land and people are buying this land to develop it. M. Hayward questions if it is the ZBA's responsibility to protect the undeveloped land from development, especially in the Rural Residential zones. Councilor Hoffman does not believe it is the ZBA's responsibility to protect the undeveloped land. M. Hayward questions if this applicant changes the character of the neighborhood by putting in a business rather than a residence. Councilor Hoffman counters that people who were attracted to White Oaks Rd. for its rural character would view any development as a change to the neighborhood. T. Sorell supports the application. She likes the proposal because this would be a small campground in a great, rural location with short-term rentals.

M. DellaVecchia is concerned with screening from the road. He questions if it would take away from the rural atmosphere to see 16 trailers from White Oak Rd. J. LaRoche likes recreation-focused proposals and is in support of this application. T. Whitney acknowledges the setback of the campground from the road but is concerned about approving a commercial use in a residential area and what that will entail. J. LaRoche feels that since the application is not for a retail store, it should not create an increase in traffic. J. LaRoche is not concerned about the proposed water main.

Councilor Hoffman does not see a reason to deny it. So, he is in favor of the application. M. DellaVecchia discusses how White Oaks Rd. is heavily trafficked now and every time an applicant wants to build a development there, the board hears about the big traffic problems. J. LaRoche feels that if the applicant were building single-family homes, there would be a lot more traffic than the proposed campground may generate. T. Sorell points out that not all 16 RV sites will be rented at all times. M. DellaVecchia believes that there is a need for them and that the campground will fill in the summer. J. LaRoche believes this campground is better than more Airbnb's.

J. LaRoche motions to approve application ZB02026-016 where a variance is requested from article 235-30 of the zoning ordinance to permit mixed use of the property to include a proposed 15-site year-round RV campground with accompanying single-family use as specified by the applicant. The application narrates that granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest and granting the variance would not be contrary to the public interest because As established, and regularly affirmed, by NH Supreme Court, "public interest" and "spirit of the ordinance" criteria are considered together (See, Chester Rod & Gun Club v. Town of Chester, 152 N.H. 577, 580 (2005); Malachy Glen Associates, Inc. v. Town of Chichester, 155 N.H. 102, 105—06 (2007); and Farrar v. City of Keene, 158 N.H. 684, 691 (2009)). To decide whether granting a variance would be contrary to the public interest, or contrary to the spirit and intent of the ordinance, the ZBA must determine whether the proposed use aligns with the goals and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, as guided by the Master Plan. The Zoning Ordinance designates the Residential Rural Corridor (RR2) District as an area "intended to recognize the historic, scenic and agricultural values of the areas associated with Parade, Meredith Center and White Oaks Roads. Because this site is situated amidst a mix of land uses, including

single-family residential and agricultural (permitted by right), cluster subdivision (allowed by conditional use permit) and two-family residential (not permitted) all within 300 feet, a multi-use site would create an opportunity to enjoy the historic and agricultural character of the region in a way that complements the surrounding land uses. A caretaker's residence is a customary element of a traditional New Hampshire campground. While we accept the Land Use Office's determination that the single-family home will not be considered a subordinate or accessory aspect of the campground use (a use requiring a special exception), we contend that a caretaker's home is a necessary element of the operation of this proposed campground. Its presence will facilitate not only best management of the site, but also immediate response to any emergent matters. Ultimately, this proposed use requires site plan approval from the Planning Board, where all aspects of the design will be further scrutinized to adherence to the goals of the Master Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Site Plan Review regulations. In short, were this Variance granted, there would be no detriment to the essential characteristics of the neighborhood, nor would public health, safety or welfare be threatened. The RV Campground aligns with the Ordinance's goals of promoting diverse land uses and tourism while maintaining adequate light, air, and safety, similar to other approved mixed-use variances in Laconia.

Granting the variance would do substantial justice because determining whether substantial justice will be done by granting a variance requires the Board to conduct a balancing test. If the hardship upon the owner/applicant outweighs any benefit to the general public in denying the variance, then substantial justice would be done by granting the variance. It is substantially just to allow a property owner the reasonable use of his or her property. In this case, there is no benefit to the public in denying the variance that is not outweighed by the hardship upon the owner. This site is uniquely positioned amidst a mix of land uses. As such, mixed use of the site will not have the same impact as it would if it were proposed amidst an area of uniform uses. For example, other areas of White Oaks Road are dominated by a single type of use (e.g., blocks of uniformly sized single-family lots). In those areas, the balance point between the rights of the landowner and the potential public impacts would be substantially different. Granting this Variance allows reasonable property use, prevents financial loss, and benefits the community with recreational options, outweighing minimal impacts, as seen in similar Laconia cases. As stated above, the unique mix of uses existing in close proximity to this site presents a unique rationale supporting this request.

If the variance were granted, the values of the surrounding properties would not be diminished because the RV Campground's low-density design, buffering and landscaping will maintain or enhance surrounding properties, as evidenced by similar recreational developments in Laconia. None of the surrounding properties would suffer any diminution in value through the granting of this Variance. Rather, this use will improve the value of the site without any negative impact to the value of the surrounding properties.

Regarding unnecessary hardship, no fair and substantial relationship exists between the general public purposes of the ordinance provision and the specific application of that provision to the property because as stated previously, the unique mix of uses existing in close proximity to this site presents a unique rationale supporting this request. The Ordinance's purpose of preventing overcrowding is upheld in this spacious parcel, which, in itself, exists amidst a mix of uses.

The proposed use is a reasonable one because A small-scale RV Campground is a reasonable use which aligns with Laconia's tourist-friendly zoning, and is in keeping with previously approved low-impact recreational uses.

Councilor Hoffman seconds the motion. M. DellaVecchia calls for a vote. J. Laroche, E. Hoffman, and T. Sorell vote in favor. M. Hayward and T. Whitney vote in opposition. M. DellaVecchia abstains. With three in favor and two opposing and one abstention, the motion passes. The application is approved.

7.II.ZB2026-017 371 White Oaks Rd

The applicant is seeking a special exception to allow for a campground to exist in the RR1 where it is by special exception.

R. Boddie remains recused from this application.

M. DellaVecchia asks now that the use is okay if the board should review their special exception application. R. Mora explains that M. DellaVecchia must open the application to the public for the opportunity to comment as well, since it a separate application.

M. DellaVecchia opens public comment at 7:04 PM.

G. Joyce returns to the podium. He feels that the ZBA is not adhering to the purpose of the RR1 and RR2 zones. He explains that the RR zones were created to maintain open spaces on the road including Parade Road, Meredith Center Road, and White Oaks Road. He points out that the City of Laconia set the RR zones 30 years ago for this purpose. He feels that today, variances seemingly are so easy to come by. It seems like anytime anybody comes up for a variance and if there's no opposition then then it goes through. There is reason to maintain the RR zones since their purpose is being disregarded in granting use variances. He feels that the City should just maintain its existing open spaces. He is not opposing campground, but he believes it should be in a different location.

R. Boddie returns to the podium. He reminds the board that Stephen Doody of 398 White Oaks Rd. wrote a letter to the ZBA in opposition of this campground. He also suggests potentially creating a buffer in between the RR1 and RR2 zones to keep the proposed campground out of the RR2 zone.

D. Sassan responds to the public comments. He explains that he believes the lot has a 75 ft setback. He also believes that the first RV would be about 150 ft back from the property line. J. Fisher explains that he has toured the property twice. He explains that the proposed residence is at the rear of the property, which he has not been able to see from White Oaks Rd. He also offers the board visual representation should they need it to make a decision.

D. Sassan adds the T. Mahoney is willing to plant screening plants as well. This would be an acceptable condition of approval. He adds that this application must go through the planning board also.

M. DellaVecchia closes public comment at 7:10 PM.

Councilor Hoffman asks R. Mora if campgrounds are allowed by special exception because the property is in the RR zone. R. Mora confirms this. Councilor Hoffman asks R. Mora what zones allow campgrounds by special exception. R. Mora answers that campgrounds are allowed by a special exception in RR1, RR2, and SFR. They are not permitted in every other district and the only district where they are allowed by a conditional use permit is the commercial resort zone. Councilor Hoffman follows by explaining that this application is not contrary to the to the spirit of the ordinance that a campground be here because it is one of the zones allows them by special exception. R. Mora agrees. M. Hayward suggests that an applicant could build a campground in six other zones without a special exception. She refers to the CR, C, U, IP, and AI as zones in which a special exception is not needed for a campground. She asks if this would be possible because of the mixed use. R. Mora responds that the special exception is allowing the applicant the use of the campground. He explains that the City allows campgrounds by special exception in RR1, RR2, SFR; and the CR with a conditional use. The variance that the applicant was approved for is for mixed use to allow them to have two primary uses on the lot. The applicant is requesting to have an owner-occupied campground. This would be the owner's primary residence. The variance for having two primary uses on the lot. The special exception is for that is for the use of the campground.

J. LaRoche makes a motion to accept application ZB02026-017 where a special exception is requested for the use of a campground RV tent as specifically authorized by zoning ordinance table of permitted uses article 235 section 26 as specified by the applicant. The application narrates that the use requested is specifically authorized in this chapter. The Table of Permitted Uses dictates that a special exception is required for campground use within the RR Districts. The requested use will not create undue traffic congestion or unduly impair pedestrian safety. As determined by the Land Use Office, and supported by the Planning Board, a recently approved subdivision located in the immediate vicinity along White Oaks Road did not generate significant concerns about traffic, nor did it warrant a traffic study. This use, which would generate considerably less traffic, presents even less concern, however, if warranted, the proposed use will be subject to traffic impact

review by the Planning Board. Presently, there are no sidewalks in this area of White Oaks Road. As such, it is not possible currently for the site to participate in the enhancement of neighborhood pedestrian network. However, the applicant is interested in working with the City to accommodate pedestrian facilities at the time pedestrian infrastructure is brought to this area.

The requested use will not overload any public water, drainage of sewer system or any other municipal system, nor will there be any significant increase in stormwater runoff onto adjacent property or streets.

An engineered stormwater management plan, complying with all city requirements, will be presented to the Planning Board as part of site plan review. This development will enhance wastewater conditions, as the entire site will become connected to the public sewer system.

The requested use will not create excessive demand for municipal police, fire protection, schools or solid waste disposal services. All parties understand and accept that the City recognizes NH RSA 216-1 to restrict permanent year-round residency whenever a site is approved as a campground. As such, visitors will not be eligible for residency through their affiliation with the site. The site will be operated like many other traditional recreational campgrounds, which statistically do not present an elevated threat, danger or demand on public services.

Any special provisions for the use as set forth in this chapter are fulfilled. This is not applicable.

The requested use will not create hazards to the health, safety, or general welfare of the public, nor be detrimental to the use of out of character with the adjacent neighborhood. As identified above, campgrounds do not inherently present an elevated threat to health safety or general welfare. This campground, which pursues to meet the City's special exception criteria, will exist amidst a variety of recreational, agricultural and residential uses, all of which contribute to the character of the neighborhood. This site will present an opportunity for visitors to harmoniously coexist with other uses in this neighborhood. The unique and iconic existing residence will remain visible from the road while the existing vegetative screen will be enhanced and maintained to provide audio and visual screening between campground activities and the surrounding properties and streetscapes.

The proposed location is appropriate for the requested use. By constructing engineered stormwater management facilities, connecting entirely to public sewer and enhancing existing screening, the applicant has further optimized a site which was already naturally conducive to this use.

The requested use is consistent with the spirit and intent of this chapter and the Master Plan. As prioritized in Chapter 235 of the City Code, this proposed project, within the Residential Rural Corridor District, complements the "historic, scenic and agricultural values" of the district. Further, public health and safety will be enhanced through the proposed connection to the public sewer system. This project augments the inherent natural and recreational value of this property in a way that forwards the City's Master Planning vision of "maintaining a balance between natural resources and continuing economic development for the benefit of current and future residents, businesses, and seasonal visitors . "

Councilor Hoffman seconds the motion. M. DellaVecchia calls for further discussion by the board. M. Hayward explains that the only criteria under the special exception that she believes the application does not meet is number six because it alters the character of the neighborhood. Councilor Hoffman asks if the board should make it a condition of the approval that the applicant must screen the campground from the road. M. Hayward explains that he can add a provision with number five. M. DellaVecchia asks if the board wants to add a special provision. M. Hayward responds no but maybe Councilor Hoffman does. Councilor Hoffman asks if he must make a motion to add a special provision. R. Mora explains that it would be an amendment to the original motion to add a condition of whatever you're looking to add. Councilor Hoffman amends the original motion to add a condition of approval that the RV sites be screened from the road by plantings. M. DellaVecchia asks if the board would like to continue with any further discussion. T. Sorell clarifies that this application still has to be reviewed by the planning board as well. M. DellaVecchia confirms that this is correct. M. DellaVecchia calls for further discussion by the board. There is no further discussion. M. DellaVecchia calls for a vote. M. DellaVecchia calls for a vote. J. Laroche, E. Hoffman, T. Whitney, and T. Sorell vote in favor. M. Hayward

votes in opposition. M. DellaVecchia abstains. With four in favor and one opposing and one abstention, the motion passes. The application is approved. D. Sassan thanks the city staff and says they have been extremely helpful.

8. PUBLIC HEARINGS, POSSIBLE CONSIDERATION AND VOTE Note: The Purpose Of This Agenda Section Is For The Board To Have A Presentation From The Applicant And Open A Public Hearing For The Public To Provide Input. The Board May Also Deliberate The Application, Decide And Conduct A Final Vote At This Time.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

- 9.I. Planning Board Monthly Report

R. Mora shares the monthly Planning Report with the board

10. ADJOURNMENT

M. Hayward motions to adjourn. J. Laroche seconds the motion. Unanimous. The meeting adjourns at 7:14 PM

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

Greyson Draper, Planning Technician

This meeting facility is ADA accessible. Any person with a disability who wishes to attend this public meeting and needs additional accommodations, please contact the department at (603) 527-1264 at least 72 hours in advance so necessary arrangements can be made.