

FINAL

Bridgewater Planning Board
May 19, 2026 Work Session Minutes

Board members present: Chair- Patrick Roach, Vice Chair- Ken Weidman, Joe Wilkas, Paul Wilson, Ex-officio- Terry Murphy

Public present: None

Patrick called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and stated the purpose of the meeting was to further discuss Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). Terry declared that the meeting was a closed meeting due to the discussion involving attorney's correspondence and suggested agreeing on the major components of the ADU regulations so they can be made marketable to the public, with the understanding that the board could tweak details later if necessary.

The board conducted a comparison of the attorney's recommendations with several key reference documents, including Steve's ADU Zoning Ordinance Draft with Restrictions, the Town of Hebron's ADU draft, State of NH ADU regulations, and existing Town of Bridgewater regulations. The purpose of this review was to identify areas of alignment, differences, and potential revisions as the board works toward a publicready ADU regulation framework.

Extensive comparison discussion was held regarding the definition of an ADU, eligibility and limitations (criteria for qualifying properties and allowable configurations), dimensional, siting, and environmental requirements (setbacks, lot size, placement, and environmental protections), parking and access (required spaces, driveway considerations, and emergency access), water supply and sewage/septic considerations (adequacy, capacity, and compliance with state/local standards), owner occupancy versus residency and enforcement mechanisms, aesthetic and architectural standards (compatibility with primary structures and neighborhood character), safety standards (fire, egress, and lifesafety requirements), shortterm rentals (whether ADUs may be used and under what conditions), grandfathered vs. existing vs. new construction (how different categories of structures should be treated), electrical services (shared vs. separate service considerations), attached vs. detached ADUs (distinctions, allowances, and regulatory implications), and various standards that will apply to ADUs without needing ADU specific regulations (as they will need to meet site plan, building code, and building permit requirements as applicable). The board made edits and adjustments to the attorney's draft ADU regulations. The revised draft will be presented at the next board meeting for further review and discussion.

Terry suggested that the board review and update the building regulations next, noting that this would be a logical followup to the ADU regulation work.

Brief discussion was held regarding the sign ordinance, prompted by the increasing presence of business signs appearing around town- including those for landscapers, real estate services, and similar commercial activities.

The minutes from March, April, and May were not voted on due to the meeting being a work session. The meeting was adjourned at 8:23 PM.