

TOWN OF WESTMORELAND PLANNING BOARD
Minutes May 4, 2026

Planning Board Members Present: Lauren Bressett (Chair), Bruce Smith (Vice Chair), John Snowdon (Selectman) Liana Capra. Alternates: John Stronk and Larry Siegel. Absent: Kristen Riley. Guest: Jim Church.

Chair Lauren Bressett called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Administrative Business:

- The Board acknowledged the recent resignations of Allison Fissette and Lisa Prince.
- Jim Church expressed interest in becoming a member of the Planning Board and will be recommended to the Board of Selectmen for appointment.
- The Board remains one member short and continues to seek interested candidates to fill the vacancy.
- Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Liana Capra, seconded by Bruce Smith, to approve the minutes of April 6, 2026 as printed. Motion passed 5-0. Larry Siegel Abstained
- Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by John Snowdon, seconded by Bruce Smith, to approve the minutes of April 11, 2026 as printed. Motion passed 5-0. Larry Siegel Abstained

Forum Discussion Recap

- The Board discussed observations from the recent forum, noting strong community support for conservation and preserving rural character.
- It was also noted that residents may support development approaches including Cottage Court and Cluster Housing that preserve open space while allowing for affordable housing options.

Development Constraints Map

- Ongoing work to correct inaccuracies in conservation land mapping was discussed.
- Chickering Farm conservation status was clarified: approximately 350 acres protected and 500+ acres not protected; riverfront land is protected.
- The Board agreed municipality-owned and state-owned lands should be categorized separately from conserved lands.
- Tax lien and current use properties should not be labeled as conserved.
- Additional map corrections were identified, including road accuracy, labeling clarity, and proper differentiation between Class V and Class VI roads. Todd Horner (Southwest Regional Planning Commission) will have staff update the map with noted corrections.

- Discussion was held regarding Class VI roads and potential future impacts of legislative or local changes.
- The Board considered recommending evaluation and possible discontinuation of certain Class VI roads to the Selectboard.
- Crusher Road was confirmed as a private road/driveway, with any potential development requiring standard subdivision review.

Ordinance Review and Updates

- The Board reviewed AI-assisted ordinance feedback (“Town Lens”). There were some weaknesses pointed out by this review and it can be used as a reference tool.
- Areas identified for improvement include:
 - “Temporary” is used in multiple ordinances, particularly related to ADU occupancy. A clearer definition is needed.
 - Clearer criteria for ZBA special exception decisions
 - Strengthening stormwater and groundwater protections
- Updated ordinance copies will be printed for Board members.

Storage Containers Ordinance Discussion

- The Board discussed creating clearer definitions and regulations for storage containers.
 - Define containers as structures subject to existing zoning regulations
 - Avoid overly specific screening requirements
 - Use language modeled after other NH towns
 - Exclude currently registered road trailers from regulation
- Questions remain regarding permitting requirements and property assessment impacts.

At 7:32 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Larry Siegel and seconded by Liana Capra. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Jodi Scanlan