

Planning Board Minutes

Date: August 21, 2025

Meeting Convened: 1804

In attendance:

Michael Wallace - Board Chair - EXCUSED
Jonathan Cote
Tom Malcolm (COE)
Avern Danforth
Michelle Anderson
Heidi Wheaton

Alternate members:

Evan Campbell
Maghann Runyon - Board Secretary

Also in Attendance:

Special Guests:

Emily Sprecher
Lisa CEO of Wabanaki Heath

Members of the Public: 8 in person, 2 on Zoom

Opening Statements: General welcome to board members, guests and members of the public.

Old Business:

Review and accept meeting minutes from March 6, 2025

Motion Evan Campbell, 2nd Michelle Anderson
Vote 6-0-1 (CEO abstained)

New Business:

Site plan application for 40 Oxford Street

Opening remarks from CEO Tom Malcom:

Site plan previously approved.
Term expired prior to project kick-off
Minimal changes to the site plan

Presentation Emily Sprecher:

Review of site plan and small minor changes to previously approved plan.
Update to landscaping and ADA ramps

Lisa, CEO of Wabanaki Health, provided an overview of Wabanaki's services, mission and purpose, healing and family support.

Michelle Anderson - expressed full support of the project and its importance to the community.

Heidi expressed the same sentiments.

Public hearing:

Tim Smythe Lincoln Street - Expressed concern about public safety and the populous that the center will house.

Lisa Responds: It is a house with 9 people at any given time. They have no reason to expect any issues. The group has several homes that are run in the same way, and have never had any type of public safety issues. Staff is present at all times.

Peggy Cumming, bordering neighbor - Questions who is served

Lisa Responds - not just the Wabanaki, all community members are served.

Peggy Cumming - greatest concern is on the property state (current) wants to better clean up of weeds and the tar area, and pushed for a date for project completion.

Tom Wabanaki representative - states working to get grant review, putting out to bid in next two weeks. Projected start in Winter of 2025

Peggy Cumming - 2nd greatest concern is the mouse population that has increased, requested a contingency for rodent issues (unknown)

Board will not make a decision on this issue

Charles, community member - supports the initiative, lives adjacent to another recovery center and states it's the best thing for his neighborhood.

Bryan Lawrence - abutting neighbor, has run a similar program with great results and fully advocates for this program.

Peter Jamison - community member fully supports the program, you never know who will need this, a value add to the community.

Stacy Smith - abutting neighbor, concerned about landscaping issues

Emily responds with a review of the landscaping plans, adding additional trees as a buffer

Lisa impresses her understanding of timelines, and expresses sentiment that the project is moving forward.

Tim - Community member, questions who's paying for the program

Lisa responds with federal grants and donor, no Millinocket tax dollars will fund this project.

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED

Site Application final review

Avern Danforth states not much has changed from 2 years ago, working with eth Wabanaki has always been seamless as they are organized and all is accounted for.

Motion to Pass

Jonathan Cote
2nd Evan Campbell

Vote 7-0-1 (Tom Malcolm CEO abstained)

Motion to adjourn

Maghann Runyon
2nd Avern Danforth

Vote 7-0-1 (Tom Malcolm CEO abstained)