

Town of Chelsea Planning Board

Meeting Minutes

June 24, 2026 | 6:00 PM | Chelsea Town Office

Roll Call

Members Present: Joel Alexander, Kathryn Temple, John Bennett, and Rachel Gorneau

Members Absent: Sarosh Sher

Staff Present: Greg Lumbert (CEO) and Natalie Thomsen (Planning Board Assistant)

The Board noted that Tony Loiko has notified the Town that he does not wish to continue serving on the Planning Board.

Call to Order

The Planning Board meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

Election of Officers

The Board held its annual election of officers.

Chair – Joel Alexander

Motion: Rachel Gorneau

Second: John Bennett

Motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair – Sarosh Sher

Motion: Rachel Gorneau

Second: Kathryn Temple

Motion carried unanimously.

Secretary – Rachel Gorneau

Motion: Kathryn Temple

Second: John Bennett

Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

June 3, 2026 Minutes

Motion: Kathryn Temple

Second: John Bennett

Motion carried unanimously.

Capital Area Self Storage – Conceptual Discussion (103 River Road)

The project engineer presented a conceptual overview of a proposed expansion of the existing Capital Area Self Storage facility at 103 River Road. The discussion was informal; no formal application has been submitted and no action was taken. The

Handwritten signatures of board members. From top to bottom, they appear to be: a signature that looks like 'J. Alexander', a signature that looks like 'K. Temple', a signature that looks like 'J. Bennett', and a large, sweeping signature that spans across the bottom of the page, possibly 'R. Gorneau'.

allowing the Town Manager to make purchases without seeking bids is \$5,000, and an increase to approximately \$10,000 to \$20,000 was requested. Board members noted that a \$10,000 threshold is common among comparable municipalities.

Planning Board Assistant Thomsen will research typical thresholds and what expenditures fall within them, review the change in dollar values since 2011, survey neighboring communities, obtain the relevant Select Board budget figure, and contact the Town Manager to confirm what she is seeking. A memo will be prepared for the next meeting.

Lighting Ordinance

The Board discussed whether to pursue a separate lighting ordinance or rely on the applicable state lighting standards. Planning Board Assistant Thomsen will circulate the state standard so the Board can decide whether any additional local provisions are warranted.

Business Development Ordinance – Application Form and Fee Schedule

The Board discussed the need for an application form to implement the newly adopted business development ordinance. After reviewing options, the Board favored using the Town of Dresden's application as a starting model. Planning Board Assistant Thomsen will prepare a draft application for the Board's review, targeted for the first meeting in August. The Board also noted that a fee schedule for business development applications has not yet been set and will need to be established.

Mineral Extraction / Mining Ordinance

Consistent with the Board's prior decision, no substantive review of the mineral extraction ordinance was undertaken at this meeting. The item will be brought back for discussion in August.

Change of Use Inquiry – Former Car Dealership Property

Staff reported an inquiry from a prospective tenant interested in renting a property formerly used as a car dealership. Questions raised for further review included whether the prior business use is grandfathered, whether the lot meets applicable size requirements, whether the proposed new use constitutes a change of use, and whether the Town's ordinance adequately defines "use." A related question was noted regarding an unsafe structure on the property and the process for obtaining court permission to clean it up. Staff will follow up with the CEO on the grandfathering question; if the prospective tenant wishes to proceed, the matter may come before the Planning Board under the business development ordinance.

Next Meeting

The next Planning Board meeting was scheduled for July 29, 2026.

Adjournment

Motion: Rachel Gorneau