Town of Rockport Planning Board
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 26, 2026

Meeting held in the Opera House GCPR.

Board Present:	Jeffrey Leclair, Tom Laurent, Jan Rosenbaum, Rob Dybas
Board Absent:	Sam Clark, Peter Sarno
Staff Present:	Orion Thomas, Director of Planning and Development Geoff Parker, Audio and Visual Technician

Meeting recording link:
https://youtube.com/live/B-Twh3zEOwM?feature=share

Agenda

1. **[00:03:31]** Call meeting to order
2. **[00:04:04]** Public comments on non-agenda items
3. **[00:04:11]** Adjustments to the agenda
4. **[00:04:17]** Approve minutes
    a. January 22, 2026
5. Action items:

[00:05:11] a. **Subdivision Review Waiver Request** (Maine Statutes Title 30-A, §4403) for a parcel located at **162 Camden St Camden, ME 04843**. This parcel is identified by the **Town of Camden as Tax Map 117 Lot 8**, which is owned by **Chen Family Property, LLC**. This request is being represented by **Andrew Hedrich of Gartley & Dorsky Engineering & Surveying.**

[00:15:49] b. **Pier Review** application for the parcel located at **45 Pandion Lane Rockport, ME 04856**. This parcel is identified as **Tax Map 20 Lot 151**, which is owned by **Elizabeth Rodini and Charles Rudin.** This application is being represented by **William Gartley of Gartley & Dorsky Engineering & Surveying**.

[00:36:51] c. Zoning Map amendment recommendation

[02:02:14] d. Subdivision Ordinance amendment recommendations

[02:51:38] e. Land Use Ordinance amendment recommendations

[03:55:12] f. Workplan

6. **[04:09:10]** Recurring items
    a. Comprehensive Plan
7. **[04:09:26]** Adjourn to Workshop re: future ordinance amendments

Agenda Item #1: Call Meeting to order

[00:03:31]

Meeting was called to order at 5:33 pm and a quorum was established.

Agenda Item #2: Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

[00:04:04]

No Comments received for non-agenda items.

Agenda Item #3: Adjustments to the Agenda

[00:04:11]

No adjustments were made to the agenda.

Agenda Item #4: Approval of minutes from January 22, 2026

[00:04:17]

Motion:	Mr. Rosenbaum moved to approve the January 22, 2026 minutes as amended in the SharePoint.
Seconded:	Mr. Laurent seconded.
Discussion:	No further discussion.
Vote:	4-0-0

Agenda Item #5a: Subdivision Review Waiver Request (Maine Statutes Title 30-A, §4403) for a parcel located at **162 Camden St Camden, ME 04843**. This parcel is identified by the **Town of Camden as Tax Map 117 Lot 8**, which is owned by **Chen Family Property, LLC**. This request is being represented by **Andrew Hedrich of Gartley & Dorsky Engineering & Surveying.**

[00:05:11]

PRESENTATION:

Andrew Hedrich of Gartley & Dorsky is representing Mr. Chen at the property located at 162 Camden Street. This location is in both Rockport and Camden. Mr. Chen is proposing to put in a seven (7) unit condominium development on his 2.53-acre lot. A majority of the property falls within Camden, with a portion of approximately 3,600 sqft in Rockport. According to Maine Statutes, parcels across multiple municipalities need to be reviewed under joint review. With 97% of the project being done in Camden, they are seeking a waiver for the joint review, since there is no plan for development on the parcel in the Rockport area, as it mostly falls within the setback zone. On February 19, 2026, the Camden Planning Board granted a joint meeting waiver. If the Rockport Planning Board were to approve the waiver for the joint meeting, they would collaborate with Director Thomas to see if they need to return as they go through the process.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD: **[00:07:30]**

Mr. Laurent inquired if taxes were paid to Rockport on the section of the parcel located in Rockport. Mr. Hedrich was not sure as he did not look at the tax records.

Mr. Rosenbaum inquired if there were any utilities going through the Rockport section of the parcel. Mr. Hedrich commented that there is no disturbance to that section of the parcel.

Chair Leclair inquired about the setback – does the Rockport section of the parcel fall within the 15-foot setback? Mr. Hedrich commented that a majority of it does fall within the 15-foot setback, just a little sliver does not.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST: **[00:09:36]**

Chair Leclair asked the planning board members if they had a conflict of interest for this item, pier and zone map amendments. There were none.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **[00:09:47]**

Chair Leclair opened the floor to public comment at 5:39pm. There were no comments in person or online, and no written comments were received. Public comments were closed at 5:40pm.

DELIBERATION: **[00:10:06]**

The planning board discussed waiving the joint meeting with Camden's Planning Board and the need to review the subdivision for Rockport with the understanding that Camden will review.

Chair Leclair asked Director Thomas his opinion regarding the review. Since the Rockport section of the parcel falls within the setback and there are no structures or utilities in that section of the Rockport parcel, Director Thomas does not think a review would be necessary. The planning board members agreed.

Motion:	Mr. Rosenbaum moved to not require a joint review with the Camden Planning Board.
Seconded:	Mr. Laurent seconded.
Discussion:	No further discussion.
Vote:	4-0-0

Motion:	Mr. Dybas moved that the Rockport Planning Board does not need to review this application.
Seconded:	Mr. Rosenbaum seconded.
Discussion:	No further discussion.
Vote:	4-0-0

Agenda Item #5b: Pier Review application for the parcel located at **45 Pandion Lane Rockport, ME 04856**. This parcel is identified as **Tax Map 20 Lot 151**, which is owned by **Elizabeth Rodini and Charles Rudin.** This application is being represented by **William Gartley of Gartley & Dorsky Engineering & Surveying**.

[00:15:49]

PRESENTATION:

William Gartley of Gartley & Dorsky is representing Elizabeth Rodini and Charles Rudin on a new pier for their residential property in Rockport. This has been an ongoing project for the past few years. The Harbor Committee did their review in January 2024 and discussed the limitations in the ordinance. At the same meeting the Harbor Committee discussed several changes to the ordinance that would benefit this project, and those changes were voted on by the public and approved in June 2025. Permits have already been obtained from the Army Corps & DEP, and they have approval from Harbor Committee.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD: **[00:19:02]**

Mr. Rosenbaum inquired if there was a signed contract to construct the pier. Mr. Gartley responded that Proc Marine is the builder, but he is unsure if there is a contract in place. Mr. Rosenbaum reviewed the requirements from the Army Corps authorization waiver. It required a contract to be signed by October 25, 2025, and completed by October 25, 2026. If there is no signed contact, then the Army Corps of Engineers' waiver disappears. Mr. Gartley said that he would verify that they have a contract, and he confirmed that the plan is for the construction to start this spring and be completed by this October.

Chair Leclair asked for clarification as to where in the harbor the project will be. The project is beyond the outer harbor but is in the coastal harbor.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **[00:23:08]**

Chair Leclair opened the floor to public comment at 5:57pm. There were no comments in person or online, and no written comments were received. Public comment was closed at 5:57pm.

DELIBERATION: **[00:23:14]**

Mr. Dybas asked if consideration was given to the possibility of the pier being lifted and taken down the harbor during storms. Mr. Gartley responded that most piers in the past were built 6ft above mean high water and this project has the pier at 10ft, which the ordinance allows.

Chair Leclair asked Director Thomas if the Harbor Resiliency Plan addresses storm debris. Director Thomas responded that the Harbor Resiliency Plan focused on town owned assets in the harbor, including Harbor Park, the working waterfront side and Walker Park. Chair Leclair thought that perhaps something should be put into the ordinance regarding cleaning up of wharfs and piers in a future discussion.

Mr. Laurent inquired about the ground coverage from the start of the stairs to the pier. Mr. Gartley responded that the property is heavily wooded. The reason for the path of the stairs and landings is to avoid removal of large vegetation. Mr. Gartley is unsure as to how

many trees will be removed but is aware that there is a point system to be met and they will obtain a shoreland zoning permit.

Mr. Gartley commented further on the resilience of the use of granite cribs as a base. The granite is pinned together and stacked with the structure pinned to the granite. Chair Leclair asked if the increase in height helps in resiliency from storms. Mr. Gartley said it did.

Chair Leclair referred to the definition section of the LUO for piers. He feels that the definition is too broad and should be reviewed. Currently the language includes that "all" piers are to be removed by November 1; however, it is understood that the definition applies to temporary floating structures. Chair Leclair asked Mr. Gartley which portion of the pier would be removed by November 1, and he responded that only the gangway and float would be removed, the rest would remain.

Chair Leclair also inquired as to the materials used in the construction of the pier that bridges the granite and the float. Mr. Gartley responded that it is laminated, treated timbers for the decking and rails of the pier. The float is a typical float construction with solid drums for floatation, also known as encapsulated floatation.

Chair Leclair also asked if the Harbor Committee review determined that the pier does not interfere with navigation. Mr. Gartley said it did not.

Chair Leclair asked Director Thomas if the town does maintenance checks of all the piers in town. Director Thomas responded that the Harbor Master does the checks.

Mr. Dybas inquired as to what the Harbor Review Committee is looking for. Mr. Gartley responded that they review dimensional requirements.

Mr. Laurent asked how the stairs are to be anchored from start of the slope to the pier. Mr. Gartley responded that they would be anchored with posts dug into the ground, possibly even techno posts (the ones that screw in). Mr. Laurent also asked if the stair system includes standard risers, and Mr. Gartley said they do.

Chair Leclair asked the board if there were any further questions or comments. There being none, Chair Leclair asked for a motion to approve or deny the application.

Motion: Mr. Rosenbaum moved to approve the application for a pier at 45 Pandion Lane as presented by Gartley & Dorsky.

Seconded: Mr. Dybas seconded.

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: 4-0-0

Agenda Item #5c: Zoning Map amendment recommendation

[00:36:51]

PRESENTATION:

Director Thomas provided an overview regarding the zoning map amendment recommendations. The Comprehensive Plan, which was voted on by the voters, has some guidance on looking at the purpose of the zones, trying to find zones that are split and

overall clarity on zones. Areas included in the amendment recommendation include some parcels in Rockville, West Rockport, Simonton's Corner, Route 90, Route 1 and Eastward.

Chair Leclair asked what was meant by split parcels. Director Thomas clarified that split parcels are parcels that fall within two zones. The plan is to move the parcel into one zone or the other.

Chair Leclair asked if amending the zone would make it easier for the lot owner to develop their lot. Director Thomas responded that it makes it easier for the lot to be developed when it falls under one zone versus multiple zones because some zones contradict each other.

Chair Leclair asked the planning board if they had a chance to review the zone amendments and public comments in their meeting packet.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD: **[00:41:07]**

Chair Leclair asked if the planning board had any other clarifying questions for Director Thomas. Hearing none, he moved to public comment.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **[00:41:13]**

Chair Leclair opened the floor to public comment at 6:15pm.

Chip Bauer, 24 Wildwood Lane

Mr. Bauer is requesting the parcels near Wildwood Lane and Sea Light Lane not be changed to the commercial zone. Wildwood Lane is part of a subdivision and many of them have submitted letters against the zone change. Four of them are here and are in opposition. Part of the reason he bought into that subdivision 32 years ago is because of how it is laid out. There is no development going on there. The south lot is already developed, and the north lot is not developed. Currently that owner is not planning on developing. There are also covenants in place preventing any other curb cuts into the subdivision.

Jody Freitag – 10 Wildwood Lane

Ms. Freitag's property frontage goes across Wildwood Lane and abuts one of the lots in question. She provided some background as to what brought them to Rockport and why they chose to purchase the house/lot on Wildwood Lane. They purchased in this neighborhood for the natural beauty and tranquility. Over the past 20 years they have worked hard to improve the lot. They were shocked when they received the letter to rezone the abutting properties. Her initial thought was that the property across the street was going to be clearcut and potentially some sort of commercial business would go there.

Mr. Freitag mentioned that this is a private neighborhood and has always been a private neighborhood. The roads are private and town has nothing to do with their neighborhood. She is disappointed that the neighborhood could be destroyed with a commercial project or apartment buildings after all the work the neighborhood has put in. She can sympathize with the need for affordable housing; however, they are an enclosed neighborhood, and the two lots with he recommended zone change are in the middle of the subdivision. She feels that changing the zone would destabilize security, safety and tranquility of the neighborhood.

Ms. Freitag also talked about the traffic at the corner of Route 1 and Wildwood Lane. She said the corner into their subdivision is very dangerous. There have been several serious car accidents in this area. When they are going south on Route 1 it is difficult to turn left into their subdivision. Also, several residents have been rear-ended waiting to go into the subdivision. She feels that any type of development would add to the traffic on that corner.

Ms. Freitag ended her comment by asking the Planning Board to reconsider the rezoning of these lots for the well-being of the neighborhood.

Anna Remsen – 62 Meadow St.

Ms. Remsen is the abutter to the parcel on Meadow St. that is being considered for rezoning. She is concerned about the traffic on Meadow St. Her parcel is zoned residential, but she is grandfathered in to be able to have a business. What type of impacts would she have by changing the abutting parcel to a mixed business/residential use? Also, what kind of impacts would there be to Meadow St.?

Ms. Remsen also inquired if she were to sell her business, would the new owner also be grandfathered into being able to conduct business? Director Thomas spoke with Ms. Remsen regarding her parcel and mentioned that her business falls within the uses of the zone. He suggested that she set up a meeting with the Code Enforcement Officer to do a review and go over the uses on the lot to make sure they are allowable or grandfathered.

Ms. Remsen continued to express her concern about the traffic on Meadow St. regarding the zone change because the street is used as a cut through and speed is not enforced.

David Noyes – Rockport Granite

Mr. Noyes is a representative of Rockport Granite. He is in favor of the zone amendment for parcel 025-133. Rezoning the lot would allow for additional material storage and additional workforce housing for employees. The additional housing would support the new facility being built on Route 17 in Hope at 214 Main Street, which will double their production.

Barbara Krementz – 20 Wildwood Lane

She is opposed to a zone change on Wildwood Lane. Her husband sent in a letter, but she wanted to come in person. They have not built their house yet. The idea of a zone change for the parcel along Route 1, close to the entrance of the neighborhood is a gamechanger for them. Keeping the parcel non-commercial would provide a buffer visually and would maintain a safter and more tranquil environment.

Chair Leclair asked for any last comments. Public comment was closed at 6:27pm.

DELIBERATION: **[00:57:34]**

The planning board had an in-depth conversation about the zone change amendment recommendations. Some of the topics included the timing of the notification letters sent to the abutters, reasons for the changes, if there were requests from developers to change the zones within these areas, and if they affected tax rates. A majority of the comments were received for Wildwood Lane, West Street and Meadow St.

The notification requirements were met with the mailing of letters two (2) weeks before the meeting as well as a Public Notice being published in the newspaper for two (2) cycles.

Some of the parcels included in the amendment have additional covenants restrictions. Those restrictions would add additional limits. Chair Leclair also mentioned that the town does not and cannot enforce restrictive covenants. That is a civil matter and not enforced by the Code Enforcement Officer. Even if something is allowed through zoning, if there are restrictive covenants in the deed, those have to be followed.

Director Thomas mentioned that the changes were driven by the Comprehensive Plan, not by requests from developers as he has not received any from them. Chair Leclair also commented that having parcels with split zones changed to fall under one zone helps applicants go through the process for approvals.

Mr. Rosenbaum asked if zone changes affect property tax. Director Thomas responded that zone change has no effect on taxes.

Mr. Laurent expressed concern about the Code Enforcement Officer not looking at restrictive covenants before issuing permits that violate those covenants. Chair Leclair commented that by law the Code Enforcement Office cannot deny a permit if it meets the code and zone requirements. Director Thomas also mentioned that we don't enforce the private nature of restrictive covenants because when the Planning Board does a review of a subdivision, restrictive covenants are reviewed and determined if they are realistic. In the past, approval was given by homeowners' associations, as they were the ones to enforce the covenants. Those are fading away and the question is who's going to enforce and uphold the covenants. Unfortunately, the Planning Office does not have the time to enforce the covenant restrictions. It is up to the homeowner.

Chair Leclair asked the Planning Board if the other parcels with zone change suggestions could proceed, because they are minor cleanups and did not receive any opposition.

Mr. Noyes again spoke about the reasoning for the zone change for the parcel on West St. He represents 28 people who signed the letter that was submitted in January. They provide housing for 18 employees and would like to provide more.

Ms. Freitag asked if anyone had gone to view any of the lots that are being considered for zone changes. If the zone is changed to residential/mixed business and the property is sold, then anything could go on that lot. It would be their view and would increase traffic. They did not buy into that subdivision to have a business next door. She again asked for reconsideration to not change the zone of those lots.

Mr. Noyes also advised the Planning Board that the first signature on the letter is the property owner, Josh Carl. Mr. Noyes is representing the owner of the property and the owner of the business, while he is out of state on business. They are supporting the proposed change. Chair Leclair did mention that there was one letter in opposition to that change.

After further discussion, the planning board members recommended the following for the zone amendment recommendation:

- Wildwood Lane – keep as zone 903
- Meadow St – keep as zone 904
- Rockport Granite – keep recommended change to zone 907 residential/mixed business

- Other changes - all are fine with the other changes because the amendments are to be presented to the Select Board and then the voters.

The planning board voted as follows:

Motion: Mr. Dybas moved, with the exception of the Wildwood Lane and Meadow Street parcels, to approve the zone changes and recommend it to the Select Board.

Seconded: Mr. Rosenbaum seconded.

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: 4-0-0

The Planning Board took a break from 7:25p-7:30p.

Agenda Item #5d: Subdivision Ordinance amendment recommendations

[02:02:14]

Director Thomas provided an overview of the amendment recommendations along with the Comprehensive Plan. From changing the number of reviews and the type of review (combining minor and major subdivision reviews into subdivision review). These changes make things easier for the applicants and for the overall review process.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD: **[02:04:41]**

Chair Leclair asked for clarification that if an applicant were to not need a preliminary or pre-application review, do they proceed to the subdivision review? Director Thomas explained that with these revisions they can, however, they are still required to schedule a site-walk and it can be done the same day as the review. The requirement for a pre-application would be up to the Planning Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **[02:06:25]**

Chair Leclair opened the floor to public comment at 7:40 pm. There were no comments in person or online, and no written comments were received. Public comment was closed.

DELIBERATION: **[02:06:53]**

Mr. Laurent asked if you combined the minor and major subdivision sections into subdivision, and they fit both, can they just ask for certain areas to be waived? Director Thomas responded that the applicant would request what they need to have waived and provide proof that they qualify for a waiver.

The Planning Board reviewed the recommended changes to the Subdivision Ordinance. It was recommended to add hyperlinks to the statutes.

The board voted as follows:

Motion:	Mr. Laurent moved to recommend the amended Subdivision Ordinance to the Select Board with the corrected citation for Article 8.6.k.
Seconded:	Mr. Rosenbaum seconded.
Discussion:	No further discussion.
Vote:	4-0-0

Agenda Item #5e: Land Use Ordinance amendment recommendations

[02:51:38]

PRESENTATION:

Director Thomas is presenting the proposed changes to the Land Use Ordinance (LUO) as they relate to implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The proposed chapter amendments are within Chapters 300, 800, 900 and 1300. Chapter 800 has cleanup items. Chapter 300 is adding additional clarity to definitions. Chapter 1300 requires developers to extend sidewalks. Chapter 900 has amendments to some zone standards, including proposals about Drive-Through Restaurants in zone 906 close to the Rockland line; and expansion to maximum building footprints and density bonuses within zone 901.

PUBLIC COMMENT: **[02:54:02]**

Chair Leclair opened the floor to public comment at 8:24 pm.

Sarah Price – 132 Union St

She is concerned about the change in the definition of a restaurant and the adding of a definition for a restaurant drive-through. Initially drive-through was not included as a use in restaurants and was intentionally put in as part of the original definition. By taking out "drive-throughs are not permitted in restaurants" you are changing the use and now including it in the mixed residential zone along Route One (and maybe other places too). There was a lot of controversy when the definition was created. She did not see any mentions of drive-through restaurants in the Comprehensive Plan, and she knows that there was a specific intention not to have drive-through restaurants in Rockport. By making this change, it appears that drive-through restaurants will be a permitted use in Rockport. It also comes up again in zone 906.

Ms. Price also appreciates how the Planning Board works together, how Chair Leclair follows through to make sure the members have clarity on their concerns and that they listen to the concerns of the public. She wants to represent the history and intent and the work that went into building the character of the town, which is also mentioned in the Comprehensive Plan. She agreed that development is needed, but the character needs to be preserved to keep Rockport a unique place and drive through restaurants were decided to not be a part of that plan.

No written comments were received about the LUO changes.

Public comment was closed at 8:29pm.

CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS FROM THE BOARD and DELIBERATION: **[02:59:34]**

Chair Leclair mentioned that this is the first time this planning board has reviewed these changes. They will then make recommendations to the select board who will then create a warrant article for the people to vote.

Director Thomas explained that some definitions were changed to remove the regulatory items from the definition, and to put the regulation within the zone requirements. For example, when referring to the Land Use Table, "Restaurant, Drive-Through" is only permitted in zone 906 within a certain section of the zone where there is currently a drive--through restaurant. That section is a special zone 906.3.b where they have frontage on US1 and are within 0.5 miles of the Town of Rockland line. Mr. Rosenbaum asked if the only place in Rockport that would allow drive-through restaurants is within a half mile of the Rockland line. Director Thomas said it was.

Chair Leclair mentioned that the LUO happens in parts by creating a definition and making it clear by removing the zoning requirements and then putting those requirements within the zone information.

The Planning Board reviewed and discussed the recommended changes to the Land Use Ordinance.

The board voted as follows:

Motion: Mr. Rosenbaum moved to accept the changes to the Land Use Ordinance discussed tonight and recommend them to the Select Board.

Seconded: Mr. Laurent seconded.

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: 4-0-0

Agenda Item #5f: Workplan

[03:55:12]

Each committee has been tasked with creating a plan to implement the strategies within the Comprehensive Plan and to report to the Select Board with what they are planning to do. Traditionally the Planning Board has not had to submit a workplan annually to the Select Board; however, the Planning Board does have some action items from the Comprehensive Plan, and those have been compiled on the workplan table.

Motion: The Planning Board members moved to approve the workplan for the Planning Board and submit it to the Select Board.

Discussion: No further discussion.

Vote: 4-0-0

Agenda Item #6: Recurring Items

[04:09:10]

a. Comprehensive Plan

No further comments.

Agenda Item #7: Adjourn to Workshop re: future ordinance amendments

[04:09:26]

Motion: Mr. Rosenbaum moved to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded: Mr. Dybas seconded. **Vote**: 4-0-0

Meeting was adjourned at 9:39 pm and the workshop was postponed.