

Minutes Rochester Planning Commission
June 2, 2026
Rochester Town Office and via Teams

Present: Dan McKinley, Sandy Haas, Mary Fratini, Dave Curtis, Christine Masaba-Meagher, Pat Harvey (Zoning Administrator), Greg White (Teams)

Guests: Dan Ward

Call to Order: Dan McKinley called meeting to order at 6:33pm

Changes to agenda – Dan McKinley noted that the executive session was a clerical error, held over from last month’s meeting, and would be removed from the agenda.

Permit inquiries, if any

Dan Ward, 209 Saw Mill Hill Road

Dan Ward is building a 24’x24’ garage and would like a variance or waiver to the 25’ setback because he has encountered ledge in his planned location. His planned relocation would bring the garage to approximately 12’ from the property line. Reviewing the zoning bylaws, the board agreed that his request would be for a waiver rather than a variance. The board noted that the maximum allowed adjustment to the setback would be 50%, or 12.5’, and that waivers, if granted, should be for the smallest adjustment necessary to preserve a reasonable use of the property that is in keeping with the qualities of the surrounding lots.

After a lengthy discussion, the board asked that Dan, prior to submitting his formal request for a waiver, consider alternatives to his request including accepting a smaller turning radius for the driveway, building a smaller garage, choosing an alternative building method on the ledge, or changing the orientation of the structure. They asked him to submit a revised sketch of his proposal for the July meeting, to be attended by either himself or his builder to answer any follow-up questions. Dave Curtis said that he would talk with Dan’s builder in the meantime and possibly walk through the site. Sandy Haas told Dan that if he wanted to have the hearing for his waiver request at the September meeting, all documents should be submitted to the town clerk by August 1, 2026.

Witold Stelmach, 274 Campbell Hill Road

The board received an email from Witold with concerns regarding building by Brian Shiebaro at 162 Campbell Hill Road. Witold said he received a notification from the state regarding the neighboring septic system that he felt was incomplete,, and therefore invalid and that the notification referenced a proposed house that might materially impact his (Witold’s) property and about which he was not notified. He asked the board to: provide guidance on his rights as an abutting property owner regarding the septic plan and residential structure, including but not limited to, figuring out how he can be formally notified of any future permit applications, hearings, or planning decisions related to the parcel; help him determine if the notification he received was adequate and, if not, what recourse was available to him; and to note for the record his objections to the proposed plan.

The board agreed that Dan McKinley would send a letter to Witold directing his concerns about the septic notification and it’s in/adequacy to the appropriate state agency, since wastewater permits are issued by the state, and directing his concerns about proposed buildings and notifications to Pat Harvey as the town Zoning Administrator.

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Administrative Officer Report: Building and Zoning Applications

Lemack and Lewis, 360 Great Hawk Road – constructing a studio outbuilding without water; permit approved.

Anderson property, 96 Hillside Terrace – inquired about a certificate of occupancy; Pat explained that Rochester does not use or issue those

Sean Collins, 313 Colonel DeHart Stand – building a carport; permit approved.

Frank Severy, 451 Brandon Mountain Road – covering a deck; permit approved.

Pat noted that we added \$2.3 million to grand list this year as houses that had been under construction were being completed.

Approval of minutes - Minutes for the May meeting were approved as submitted.

Public Comment -- limited to 3 minutes each - none

Adjourn – Meeting was adjourned at 7:58pm

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, July 7, 2026.